

Performance, Art and the Female Nude at Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School

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Abstract

My thesis examines the event of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, which has branches in over 120 cities worldwide. Dr Sketchy's combines the format of a life drawing class with burlesque performance, creating an event that focuses on both the performance and the creation of art by the attendees. Dr Sketchy's was begun in New York in 2005 by its creator Molly Crabapple, now an internationally recognized artist and popular alternative celebrity. I focus my study on the Christchurch branch of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, founded in June 2010 by Audrey Baldwin, a performance artist and Fine Arts graduate of the University of Canterbury.

In my thesis I discuss the way Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School combines and compromises between the life drawing format and the burlesque performance, despite the differences and seeming incompatibilities between these two forms. I investigate Dr Sketchy's as a contemporary cultural performance which combines and to some degree inverts established genres of performance. I give a detailed history of burlesque performance and of life drawing within art education to allow a comprehensive comparison of the two traditions, particularly the way each has conceptualized the nude female body. I argue that the combination of the two forms allows Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School to transgress the traditional boundaries of each format and introduce influences that would otherwise endanger the status of life drawing and burlesque performance within their respective contexts. I also argue that the nude within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School transgresses the traditional conception of the nude within life drawing by using burlesque as an acceptable reference for the transgressive elements of the show.

The arguments put forward in this thesis are the product of extensive participant observation, interviews and literature reviews on the relevant art and performance traditions.

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INTRODUCTION

Since 2005, Dr. Sketchy's has been the name in alternative drawing. From illegal flashmobs to the Museum of Modern Art, Dr. Sketchy's has brought artists a rule-breaking cocktail of dames, drinking and drawing. Dr. Sketchy's branches draw in over a hundred cities around the globe, from Akron to Zagreb. Whether you're an artstar or a scribbling newbie, Dr. Sketchy's is the perfect place to get your fill of life-drawing

Dr. Sketchy's is the brainchild of artist Molly Crabapple

(www.drsketchys.com “What is Dr Sketchy’s?”)

In June 2010, the debut session of the Christchurch branch of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School opened at a local bar to a packed house. For the debut session in Christchurch, the bar was full well before the advertised starting time and newcomers were turned away throughout the night to preserve what limited space remained. Those that did beg their way past the door wench had to sit outside on the cold winter's night, sketching what they could see through the large windows of the bar. Inside, two models pose dressed as Marie Antoinette and a French courtier, with Marie shedding her many ruffled layers through the course of the evening through fan dances and the art of the burlesque striptease. The packed house looked on with loud encouragement during the performances and with silent reverence during the still poses.

During timed poses, the audience turned artist, peering over sketchbooks, smudging charcoal and pastel on their beer glasses and hurriedly sketching before the klaxon was sounded to end the two, five or ten minute poses. Prizes in the form of vouchers for local businesses were given out for the best drawings, the best interpretations, the best inclusions of something “French” and for the best audience costume. One of the audience members was hauled on

stage by the “sketchy girls”, the organizers of the Christchurch branch, in order to bare her French knickers to the assembled artists for inclusion in the next drawing. Throughout the night sketches of varying training and talent, from professional to first-time, were passed around and judged, commended and applauded to equal levels; the creation of “traditional” fine art life sketches was only one of the purposes of the evening, and for most assembled, it seemed the performance and the atmosphere was the draw for the event, not the desire to make fine art, though some was surely created throughout the evening.

This may all sound like just another “theme” event to draw patrons out on a cold winter’s night, but the continuing popularity of the monthly life-drawing session indicates that there is something more to Dr Sketchy’s. The intersection of high and low art practices, the removal of art creation from expected circumstances, and the melding of art and performance all complicate and deepen understandings of what exactly is occurring during the night. My research includes all of these aspects of Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School, addressing the night as a cultural performance incorporating elements of stage performance and art creation, as it is the connection between the two that poses the most interesting questions. Though performance art is itself an accepted form of art production and exhibition, the “performance of art”, that is, the performance of art creation and the authentic experience of art, is a process that traditionally only occurs within the institutions of art creation or exhibition such as the art school or museum. As well as the “performance of art” there are more active and risqué performances through the evening, which will be examined through the literature on burlesque and theatrical performances, which addresses the sexualized nature of the performances and the transgressive nature of the performances more generally. The viewpoints and expectations of the organizers will also be discussed within this research, as each branch of Dr Sketchy’s is somewhat unique, and relies on the individual organizers for the success of the event. Several of the “Sketchy Girls” will be interviewed in order to

ascertain how they have produced this event, and how they perceive the transgressions of art and performance within their own organizational activities.

Dr Sketchy's Christchurch is one of nearly 150 branches of the "Dr Sketchy's" brand worldwide, and as such could be seen as part of a franchise-style system, with suggestions and descriptions of the basic Dr Sketchy's format being sent to each new branch to assist in setting up the new location. In comparison to a traditional franchise system however, Dr Sketchy's is particularly casual and in fact rejects the title, preferring to be seen among more grass-roots community organizations such as the Stitch n' Bitch movement, though Dr Sketchy's does charge a minimal fee for use of the name and logo, and has a few central rules around their use and organization of each branch.

Dr Sketchy's is many things. It's a community, a club, a chain of licensed events, and an anti-art-movement. It is not a franchise. A franchise is a chain of identical stores where franchisees are required to lay out tens of thousands of dollars to purchase the same ketchup packets, signs, and training courses as the franchise two blocks down the street. Think McDonalds.

Dr Sketchy's is more like Stitch n' Bitch or National Novel Writing Month or the Craft Mafia. While our 100+ branches share a name, logo, guidelines and a common philosophy, we also prize regional differences. A Dr Sketchy's in Hollywood should not be identical to one in Singapore. (Dr Sketchy's Introduction pack, 2010)

Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School is, as the introduction above suggests, a complex event best categorized as part life-drawing session, part burlesque performance. As such, the performer acts the role of the model and the strip tease artist interchangeably throughout the night in a relationship with the audience, who move from acting as spectators to becoming art creators as the "act" on stage changes. Together the performer and audience negotiate the boundaries between the styles of performance, the shifting of power relations, and the changing roles

they must play. In order for the performance to be “successful” and coherent over the night, performers and audience members must identify the social cues and conventions correctly, responding to each other in the appropriate manner during each of the performance styles present. This can be seen in the change of activity in the audience of the event to support the performer; specifically, cheering and cat-calling when the performer is presenting her burlesque act, while limiting this activity when she is modelling, instead focusing on their individual art creation. These are the expected responses for each format present within Dr Sketchy’s, the life drawing and the burlesque performance, and if the audience does not react as designed then the performance could be viewed as unsuccessful in engaging the audience. The performer herself is contracted to perform both of the roles, the active burlesque performance and the stationary modelling. If a performer breaks role, such as moving when she is meant to be still it can cause a negative reaction from the audience, causing them to call out or express frustration, when within a traditional life-drawing situation they would not often interact so vocally with the model. Within the atmosphere of Dr Sketchy’s this is usually taken with good humour, and if the performer enacts the otherwise discouraged movement as an extension of her active performance (i.e. acts within character) there is much less negative feedback, and the audience reacts in a way associated to how they react with the active performance.

My approach to studying Dr Sketchy’s as an event imposes a somewhat contrived separation between the two formats present in the event, those of burlesque performance and life drawing. The event as a whole can be discussed as a form of cultural performance composed of elements of these two formats, which I am doing in part here; the separation imposed between the two formats however is designed to highlight a specific argument based on my observations. Were Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School to lose its life drawing component, it is true that there would be a larger space of time to fill, and much of the distinctiveness of the event

would be lost. What I aim to show within this thesis is that the two formats and styles of performance are used to compliment each other within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, despite their immediate contradictory understandings of the nude figure and sexualization. With this complimentary structure they also act to control the other; the burlesque offering a frame of understanding for the sexualized model and contain that sexuality in a way that allows the format of the life drawing class to continue uninterrupted. To hold the event without the life drawing activity would simply render the event a fairly standard burlesque show, but to hold the event without the burlesque it would be a life drawing class uninteresting to non-artistic attendees. Though the event works as a cohesive whole, neither format present is more central to the other, and I do not believe the event would be able to continue without the presence of both the burlesque and the life drawing activities. This has shaped the way I present the two formats in this thesis, giving each an equal weighting and exploring the history and concepts around each separately, before considering how they are combined at Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School.

Though the audience at Dr Sketchy's is not technically "performing" during the night, we can see how in relation to theories of theatrical performance and reception studies, their activities may be studied *as* performance. The audience must react in certain ways and are there to act a specific role – that of art creator – which is, for many participants, outside of their everyday activity. Even those participants that claim they are not in any way "artists", denying that this is part of their everyday identity, will enact the role of artist within the structure of Dr Sketchy's, sketching and producing art with as much engagement as the people in the audience who do claim the identity "artist". This combination of roles and the ability to take on the identity of "artist" comes in part from an identity category associated solely with Dr Sketchy's, that of "Art Monkey". Coined by creator Molly Crabapple, "Art Monkey" is the designation given to any attendee of a Dr Sketchy's session, allowing them an identity

marker that both incorporates and is outside of the traditional understandings of “artist” and “audience”. This grouping of all participants as “Art Monkey” regardless of their experience, talent or personality indicates this term may be understood in terms of *communitas* and anti-structure, as explained by Turner. All participants are removed from their everyday activities and identities within the event, and given a new designation, by which they are referred by organizers and other participants. This acts as a levelling tactic, condensing all participants regardless of their artistic skill or lack of into a similar group of “amateur” level artists. There is no expectation of high art from participants, and those that do create skilled pieces of art are often mocked and joked with, giving them no space for boastful behaviour, while those with less skilled drawing are praised for their participation and imagination as much as their finished piece. They are all in effect experiencing a liminal space, where it is designed that they act as part of a community involved with anti-structural activity.

Within this space there are conventions and sign-equipment in use, structuring how people involved represent themselves and interact during the event. The sign-equipment assists both performers and audience in presenting a particular form of identity during the event, an idealised identity which fits with the roles they are expected to play during the night. Pasties, or nipple coverings, are uniquely related to burlesque and place the on-stage performer in the category of burlesque dancer much more concretely than even their performance does. The nipple pastie is so uniquely related to burlesque that it allows the performer immediate and clear separation from other categories they may fit in according to their performance alone – stripper, comedian, dancer, circus performer. As well as this unique piece of sign-equipment utilised by the performers, the audience is expected to carry and make use of art materials such as a sketchbook and pencils. This is the equipment that separates the audience at Dr Sketchy’s from the standard performance audience, while the performance itself stops them being related solely to life-drawing artists. The audience may be reprimanded by regular

attendees or organizers if they do not continue to utilise the sign-equipment throughout the night, with an impression that if they are not there to fulfil the role of art creator as well as audience, they are not correctly playing the role expected of them. Not everyone may use the same sign equipment in this role, as some will use expensive professional materials while others may use a simple ballpoint pen, but the difference is not emphasized, but rather the general use of the items in producing art is a solidifying factor in the group identity as “art monkeys”.

This thesis has five main chapters, structured to lay out the history of both burlesque and life drawing traditions so that I may approach their synthesization within Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School with a full understanding of their separate contexts and developments.

The first chapter is broadly titled *Methodology*, and deals with the practical methodologies of my fieldwork at Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School and establishes some of the central anthropological theories used within my work, particularly those focused on the anthropology of performance.

The second and third chapters, *Burlesque and Performance* and *Life Drawing and Nude Modelling* are mirrored in their presentation, so as to give equal consideration to the histories of the two formats included within Dr Sketchy’s. *Burlesque and Performance* looks at the history of burlesque and neo-burlesque and at ideas of power and representation of female sexuality on stage. It also identifies the dichotomy of the active performer/passive audience, which is reversed in the following chapter, and addresses the concept of *communitas* within Dr Sketchy’s. *Life Drawing and Nude Modelling* looks at the history of life drawing within art education and outside of the educational institute, explores the limits between art and pornography and the anti-structural experience of the Anti-Art School. The reversal of the

audience/performer relationship to passive model/active art-creator is contrasted to that outlined in the previous chapter.

The fourth chapter *Naked vs. Nude* directly addresses what I have identified as the key problematic between the format of life drawing/fine art and burlesque; the conception of the “nude” and the understanding of “nakedness”. “The Nude” as a fine art concept is very different and on some levels seems incompatible with the “Naked” presented within burlesque, yet they are both somehow combined within Dr Sketchy’s to produce a cohesive experience of the female figure. The transgression of the de-sexualized fine art Nude and the translations between “high” and “low” forms of art are the main focus within this chapter, which leads into my final chapter, simply titled *Conclusions*, within which I bring together the histories and theories laid out in the previous chapters and directly address the thesis questions, before coming to my final conclusions.

The questions I will be answering through this study can be framed as: What performances are occurring at Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School and how is the event negotiating the two differing conceptual backgrounds of life drawing and burlesque performance? What is the nature of the performances happening within this event, and who is doing the performing? These questions focus on the event as a cultural performance or series of performances bound within a single event, and focuses on the two formats of burlesque and life drawing identified as central to the event. This focus explores the way the two genres are crossed and inverted within the event, the conceptual disconnects between the two genres, and how they structure Dr Sketchy’s as an experience. Though there are many questions that could be asked about Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School, the actual process of the event – how it works, what participants do or think they are doing, and how the histories of the different formats are negotiated within the event – is the focus of this thesis, and where I will begin; with the event itself.

CHAPTER ONE: METHODOLOGY

The methods involved in studying Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School are dictated by the definitions I have accorded the event. As such, the primary focus is on the performances involved in the event, whether on stage or off, leading to a reliance on theories and methods associated with the Anthropology of Performance. As well as these theories I have incorporated some ideas and concepts from the wider fields of theatre studies, art history, and gender studies, in order to give a holistic and detailed understanding of certain relationships and contexts for the event. In this section I shall discuss the actual methods used during my study of the Christchurch branch of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School and then move forward to discuss the theories and how they have shaped my view of the event.

Methodology in Practice

Participant observation of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School has been my primary form of fieldwork, and has produced the majority of information for discussion in this thesis. During each session of Dr Sketchy's I participated in the drawing and art creation as well as viewing the performances. My research notes consist of both sketches and shorthand notes, and a full write-up was produced within a few days of the event itself. As each event was fully recorded by event photographers, once the images were released on the Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School Christchurch's Facebook page I compared the series of events related in photographs to my own write-up, filling in any areas where I noted further details, and identifying certain images that may be useful as possible illustrations for the thesis itself. Photographs taken on the night concern not only the performance and modelled poses but also capture the audience and their art at various times throughout the night, giving me an invaluable look into what other attendees were doing without interrupting them personally. As a regular attendee I have also gained some general knowledge of other attendees, organizers and models outside of my

sample group of interviewees. This has allowed me to draw some generalizations about the overall statistical makeup of the attendees such as their age groups, socio-economic status, and artistic training, as well as identify the quantity of repeat attendees versus one-time or new audience members. This is all information that is useful for making general statements regarding the audience as a group, details that would otherwise be difficult and disruptive to gather via survey or interview each month.

The main forms of documentation for my research are my personal notes from during and soon after the event. As Balme suggests;

Performance notes are the impressions jotted down either during or immediately after the performance. They are especially important if there is no video recording available, as it is exceptionally difficult to memorize the plethora of impressions generated by any theatre performance for a long period. Such notes are by definition highly subjective, but this is no different to responses generated by any other aesthetic object (Balme 2008 p. 138).

As Dr Sketchy's produces each show as unique and individual, there is no ability to take in several iterations of the same production, which would otherwise be suggested when studying theatre. There can be some average formula identified for the format as a whole, but each event may only subscribe to part of that formula which best suits that month's plans. An average Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School session in Christchurch can be broken down as such:

Pre-event;

Set up by organizers and performer, stage set and seating arranged

Arrival of attendees and last-minute set-up and arrangements

Beginning of event;

Welcome by MC Hells Belle, introduction of organizational crew, theme, schedule of events for the evening and introduction of the performer to the stage.

Performer takes to the stage and music starts, multiple short poses of 1-2 minutes

Some longer poses of 3-5 minutes, challenge pose with prizes

Performance and removal of a layer of costume by model/performer

Further posing, 5-7 minute range, challenge pose with prizes; may include an audience participation pose

Intermission break

Costume judging, audience members take to stage area for judging, prize given

Further posing, 3-5 or 5-7 minute range, challenge pose with prizes

Second performance, costume removed down to pasties and underwear; second performance often incorporates skilled act (fan dance, hoop tricks etc.)

Further posing, 7-10 minute range; last pose is often a 10 minute long pose. Challenge pose with prizes

End of evening thanks by MC Hells Belle, thanking organizational staff, sponsor businesses, venue, performer and sponsor businesses; announces date and theme for next event.

End of event;

Performer retreats to backstage area to redress before joining room/leaving event; organizational staff mingle and begin breaking down set and stage

Attendees pack up and finish drinks, venue usually empty within the hour.

Within a few days of each Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School I produced a full write-up of the event from arrival to departure, noting the set design, any changes in seating arrangement, and the general make-up of the audience as they arrived, particularly noting whether there was a majority of recognizable regular attendees or if there was a change in the atmosphere of the audience relating to any detail of the night. Throughout the event I participated in the art

creation process through sketching as well as taking notes on the behaviour of the attendees, performer and organizers; these sketches proved to be excellent mnemonic devices for writing more detailed descriptions of the event later on, as did the photographs taken on the night by the official photographers, though I did not consider these as documentary evidence on their own. The encouragement of socialization amongst the attendees assisted greatly in my ability to observe as well as participate, as it was not unusual or disruptive for the audience to be paying attention to each other as well as the performer, and people were encouraged to converse and share their experiences throughout the night.

Interviews have played a key role in assisting me to shape a holistic view of the event and explore in detail the different understandings and perspectives of different audience members, performers and the organizers themselves. Though I interviewed only a sample of the people involved or attending the event, I feel I have a representative spread of roles, experiences and perspectives. My sample consisted of three of the core organizational team or “Sketchy girls”, three of the female model/performers, and three general attendees, two male and one female. These were semi-formal interviews conducted both in person and via email, with face to face interviews taking between twenty minutes and one hour, depending on the role of the person being interviewed; organizers tended to require longer interviews than general attendees and models. In choosing participants from the general attendees I looked for those with a range of experiences at Dr Sketchy’s, from regular attendance to occasional, though I must acknowledge that I have only one participant who attended only a single session, and none who have ceased attending due to negative opinions of the event; due to the style of the event and my own access to participants only those who were in current attendance were asked to be interviewed.

Interviews with the three attendees focused on questions of their motivations for attending, their opinions and understanding of the nature of the event and their experiences there. Part of

these interviews involved establishing their familiarity with both burlesque performance and life-drawing classes in order to further understand their classification of the event as either art- or performance-focused, and draw out their comparisons with prior life experiences. When interviewing the three organizers questions addressed these same issues, with further questioning on the shaping of the event and their expectations of who attended and what they would perceive the event as. The three models were also asked about their experiences of modelling for life drawing classes or performing burlesque, how these experiences have influenced their understanding of Dr Sketchy's, and what they feel they are providing while on stage. Overall interview questions were split in focus to explore both each individual's personal familiarity with the performance genres exhibited, and their expectations of what other people were there to experience or what they were providing for others. As well as these formal interviews, I held informal, unrecorded conversations with attendees during sessions of Dr Sketchy's, where I was able to gather general information about other attendees such as their level of art experience and why they chose to attend the event, without disrupting the event itself.

The focus of my observation and notes has been split between those on the stage, and those off the stage. In regards to those on the stage, the next section makes use of performance theory and anthropology of performance to shape my understanding of their actions. In regards to the audience, however, there is a singular lack of appropriate theory available. When it comes to analysing and observing audience behaviour, there is little in the way of published theory and methods to guide a researcher (Bennett 1997 p. 13). Two texts which have sought to offer some guidance for researchers in this respect have formed the cornerstone of the methodology used for analysing and discussing the active audience at Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School. The two texts *The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Studies* (Balme, 2008) and *Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception* (Bennett,

1997) have each offered practical and direct guidance for evaluating the activities of the audience from an interdisciplinary and theatre studies perspective.

Part of this guidance has been an understanding of the audience as a participant rather than simply a spectator with no input into the performance and atmosphere of the event.

To study the spectator individually or collectively implies a shift from interpreting the aesthetic object to studying the cognitive and emotional responses of actual human beings. This is the field of empirical psychology and sociology, and most theatre scholars do not possess this kind of scholarly background and training. (Balme 2008 pp.34-35)

This is the type of research I have endeavoured to present in this dissertation. Methodologically there are a diverse range of techniques for analysing a performance, but I have consistently relied on a 'process-oriented' approach in my observation and analysis, while employing anthropological theory as the framework within which I understand performance as a whole. Balme distinguishes three different broad approaches to performance analysis, describing 'process-oriented' analysis as such:

How does one analyse a performance? There is, of course, no single answer to this question. In a sense, each production will throw up different questions, which the analysis must address. First of all, we can make distinctions between three broad approaches:

(1) *process-oriented* analysis focuses on the way a production is created, and tends to have a strong social-science or cultural studies bias. Here, we would be looking at the genesis of a production: the interaction of the team as they create the *mise-en-scene*. In this kind of approach, first-hand observations and interviews will play a more important role than decoding signs from the spectator position. The cinematic equivalents of this type of analysis are the popular 'making of' films available on DVDs, where, in the better examples, director, designers and cinematographers explain how they arrived at a particular style or artistic decision. The fact that the majority of artists, cinematic or

theatrical, will emphasize ‘truth’ as the ultimate category of intuition marks the limits of these kinds of interpretations. Process-oriented analysis will often follow a production as it changes over time, especially if it is performed in different cultural contexts. (Balme 2008 p.142)

Accordingly, I have focused my observations and interviews around the interaction of organizers and attendees, how the event itself is organised, and the understanding of both organizers and attendees as to what exactly they are experiencing at a session of Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School.

Bennett emphasises the relationship between the audience and the performers, and the relationships within the audience itself; studies of theatre and performances often have limited discussion of the audience outside of the experience the performance is designed to give them. This perspective misses a large part of the reasons why people attend theatre and what they may take away from the performance as part of their experience;

Indeed, the audience of even the most ‘culinary’ theatre is involved in a reciprocal relationship which can change the quality and success of a performance. No two theatrical performances can ever be the same precisely because of this audience involvement. In much contemporary theatre the audience becomes a self-conscious co-creator of performance and enjoys a productive role which exceeds anything demanded of the reader or the cinema audience. The theatre audience, like its cinematic counterpart, is also a social gathering. (Bennett 1997 p. 21)

As such, my focus has been not only on the presentation of the performance but the social experience of the audience attending the event, and how they react to and understand the combination of the burlesque and life drawing formats within Dr Sketchy’s. This has been accomplished through not only interviews with a sample of attendees, but with extensive notes on each session of Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School, which allows me to take into account

the general behaviour of a large group of people and the atmosphere of the event as a social gathering without disrupting it.

My heavy use of participant observation and my own perception of the events require me to be self-reflexive in my research, and position myself clearly in the field. Much like the participants interviewed, this requires reflection on my own background with burlesque and life drawing, and my own initial perceptions of the event. In comparison to many of the participants I come from a background of burlesque knowledge rather than art training, and this has given me a distinctive perception of the event from the viewpoint of a performance-focused spectator rather than an art-focused spectator. My attendance of the first Christchurch session of Dr Sketchy's was partly based on word-of-mouth advertising, a desire to see more local burlesque, and intrigue at the general concept. This initial session encouraged me to look at Dr Sketchy's as a potential site for anthropological study, and though I missed the second session due to prior engagements, I have not missed a session since. Despite my complete lack of art training, either secondary or tertiary, I found the event encouraging of artistic experimentation and engagement with art creation. I also found the burlesque performance side of the event to be unusually focused and structured, and began to question the differences between an event requiring both stationary posing and performance and an event requiring a series of active, visually and musically differentiated burlesque performances, as is the normal format of local burlesque shows.

Over the 16 months since June 2010 I have attended 11 of the 12 sessions of Dr Sketchy's that have been produced, experiencing a variety of themes, performers and attendees. Some attendees are what I would consider "regulars"; they have attended most of the events since their first experience, and are visible proponents of the event, often bringing along other people who may or may not have attended before. This is one of the primary ways people first experience Dr Sketchy's, through word-of-mouth and attending with a friend. I myself

have brought several people with me to different events, some of whom have become part of this group of “regulars” themselves. Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School Christchurch has an event approximately every six weeks, though there was a considerable break after the seismic events of the September and particularly February earthquakes in Christchurch over 2010-2011. The February earthquake damaged the location that had been in use until then, a bar in the central city that was now (and still is) behind cordons and inaccessible. The Canterbury earthquakes have affected Dr Sketchy’s significantly with this change of venue, as there are few venues available that fit the requirements of the event; most recently Dr Sketchy’s has been held in the bar of a local Bowls Club, which while not ideal offers the minimum requirements of space, availability and hospitality to an alternative type of event.

At each session I attended I took note of particular features of the setting and performance, as well as the general atmosphere and any unusual events. In doing this I compiled a description of the stage setting and the audience seating arrangement, with note of what I could/could not observe from my position; details of organizer and audience costumes, the makeup of the audience in terms of whether they were recognizable regulars or seemed to be new or inexperienced with the setting; details of the performance and poses of the model, how they interacted with the audience and organizers, and how the performer was received by the audience in both their active and passive roles. The audience at any single session presented a slight female majority and an age spread of between 20 and 50, with a majority presenting as between 25-35. Though I did not attempt to survey attendees at the sessions, through general conversation and observation I can state that the majority of the audience were also of middle to upper class, with most having engaged in some tertiary education and many present holding postgraduate degrees.

Interaction between members of the audience became a focus of my observation as I became aware of the different levels of interaction between those who were “regulars” and those who

were new to the event, and the difference between the level of interaction at Dr Sketchy's compared to a mainstream burlesque performance, a life drawing session, or even a normal bar setting. The high levels of interaction and what I identify and discuss later as *communitas* has shaped much of my interpretation of the event as a whole, and is a significant point of discussion when relating the event to theories of performance.

The organization of the event itself is important to understanding how it is designed, and is best described by those who organize it;

Usually it consists of finding a venue, booking a date for the venue, coming up with either a model first or a theme first, we're pretty theme oriented so usually we know exactly "we want to do this theme!" then we'll find a model for it. Yeah, make, arrange all the dates, make sure everyone can make it, start kind of designing posters; ... then, we have to touch base with sponsors to make sure they still want anything to do with us, do the media release ... we do a lot of online hype, especially through Facebook, Facebook's probably our most used platform I guess. Then it all kind of gradually builds up closer and closer, we go about assembling costumes, assembling props, we usually have like an initial meeting with the model, if we don't know them to just introduce ourselves and let them know what they're getting into! Then we have a secondary meeting where we discuss kind of the theme, costumes and possibilities, then we have a third meeting which is the final run through, which usually takes place the Sunday before the event. Usually we try and have a performance run through so they show us what they're going to do ... once that's all assembled, we usually we kind of do a lot of the work on the day when we turn up to the venue, set it up in the afternoon, I'm obsessively checking ticket sales the whole week up to the thing, I'm just "I'm just going to check the emails, going to check how the ticket sales are doing!" and just general running around and liaising with the hosts of the venue. I usually printout a performance plan so I've got the whole night broken down into okay 5 minute pose, this is the prize for that; we all kind of go over it together. (Audrey Baldwin, Interview 17/5/2011)

The division of labour at Dr Sketchy's Christchurch is split between four main people, with Audrey "Tawdry Trainwreck" Baldwin as the "Headmistress" of the Christchurch branch, acting as the figurehead and central presence within the branch. The "Deputy Headmistress" Rosie Reckless, MC Hells Belle, and photographer Paige Turner are the other members of the central organizational team at the Christchurch Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, and are who I am referring to when I discuss the organizers of the event.

This discussion of methodology has so far related solely to my own activities in the field, the background I bring to my observations, and the organisation of the event itself. Anthropological and performance studies theory also contributes to my perception and understanding of the event, and the next section will directly address the theories and concepts that I use to shape my perspective of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School. This section aims to give a solid anthropological background against which all future discussions of the event and the historical and theoretical background of burlesque performance and life-drawing may be held.

Methodology in Theory

Having outlined the practical methods involved in researching Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, I now offer some theoretical context for my research methods. The remainder of this chapter acts as an introduction to performance theory which has shaped my approach to the subject event, and outlines the context within which I will discuss my research. Anthropological theory is central to my research practice and as such this is merely an introduction to the theories and concepts present in this dissertation; further direct discussions of theoretical points will be spread throughout this thesis, and will be integral to my overall argument. Consequentially, the central chapters of this thesis will address aspects of the event

thematically, discussing relevant concepts and theoretical framings within the presentation of empirical research. To begin, however, it is necessary to identify the place of performance theory in the wider field of anthropology and identify the relationships between this theory and methodological practice.

In order to begin it is imperative to identify what exactly is understood in terms of ‘performance’. One definition of theatrical performance states that “theatrical performances are performance phenomena communicated to a collective addressee, the audience (physically present at the reception), at the very moment of their production (transmission)” (De Marinis 2004 p.235). Theatrical performance is the main genre of performance relating to the research presented here; ritual performance and the performance of self in everyday life are the other main fields of performance under anthropological interest, but will not be the focus of this thesis. Even within theatrical performance there are multiple formats and styles of performance type, and each has its own conventions and expectations around proper production and reception. Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School will primarily be understood as a small-scale stage performance or performance art production, with a high level of audience interaction and multiple performances being played out at once by people both on and off stage. It does not easily compare to traditional theatrical forms and as such comparisons will be kept to a minimum. The general conventions of a ‘performance’, in its most fluid of forms, will be the basis for any comparison, as well as an understanding of the history and cultural context of the specific performance styles present at Dr Sketchy’s.

The conventions of theatrical performance are different for different types of performance, and may be manipulated by both the on-stage performers and the offstage audience for various means. This has direct relation to J. L. Austin’s discussion of an “unhappy speech act” – if the audience does not accept the performance and abide by the behaviour expected of them, the performance as a whole may be classed as a “failure” (Austin, 1962). For

example, to compare the performance of an opera and the performance of a stand-up comedy routine, the behaviour of the audiences are quite different; if an audience were to laugh the whole way through an opera or sit silently through a comedy show both would be classed as a failure, because the audience has not played the role expected. The concept of the performative speech act has been integrated by performance theorists into the wider understanding of what a performance is, allowing theorists to look at how performances *do* things, as well as show things, and at how the speech act and the conventions of that act give authority and authenticity to specific types of performance.

To Austin, and most performance theorists, performance also relates to the idea that there is an audience experiencing and interpreting the performance in some way. Without a witness to hold you to your promise or summons, in Austin's speech acts, the performance itself cannot be seen as completed as this is part of the convention. Other theorists have taken more detailed consideration of the role of the audience in creating the performance. Parker and Kosovsky Sedgwick note that Austin's discussion of the 'proper context' for performance has been contested by recent theorists and discussed as a much more complex scene "in which the role of silent or implied witnesses, for example, or the quality and structuration of the bonds that unite auditors or link them to speakers, bear as much explanatory weight as do the particular speech-acts of supposed individual speech agents" (Parker & Kosovsky Sedgwick 2004 p.171). Richard Bauman also relates the definition of performance to the relationship between the performer and the audience, stating that performance is "a mode of communication, a way of speaking, the essence of which resides in the assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative skill" (Bauman 1986 p.3). These "theatrical performances are performance phenomena communicated to a collective addressee, the audience (physically present at the reception), at the very moment of their production (transmission)" (De Marinis 2004 p.235).

Richard Bauman also discusses the concept of framing in relation to previous theories by Goffman and Bateson. Bauman discusses how performance may include explicit and implicit messages which carry some kind of instruction as to how to “decode” or understand the other messages carried; this is what Bateson calls metacommunication, a “communication about communication”. It is this metacommunication that forms the basis of framing or keying performances, holding information and cues as to how to understand the content of the performance.

All framing then, including performance, is accomplished through the employment of culturally conventionalized metacommunication. In empirical terms, this means that each speech community will make use of a structured set of distinctive communicative means from among its resources in culturally conventionalized and culture-specific ways to key the performance frame, such that all communication that takes place within that frame is to be understood as performance within that community. (Bauman 1974 p. 295)

Within both burlesque and life drawing there is a particular reference for this metacommunication relating to the history of the two formats. Each form has a tradition behind it, which I will discuss in detail in chapters two and three of this thesis. What is worth acknowledging is that these traditions can be understood as invented ones. Hobsbawm states the “invented tradition” is

...taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.” (Hobsbawm 1983 p. 1)

Both life drawing and burlesque can be classed as part of this situation; each offers a historical basis for contemporary practices that may or may not have a direct line of descent, and in both cases the contemporary form offers this history as justification for a set of

practices that would otherwise be questionable behaviour. Burlesque particularly has an internal understanding that this is a revival, a movement dedicated to a nostalgic version of a specific historical activity, bypassing the evolutions that the form took past a certain period, in this case the 1960s. Neo-burlesque offers the “Golden Age” of burlesque as the tradition they are reviving, ignoring large parts of the factual history of the performance genre in favour of an idealized nostalgic history the modern performance is more suitably connected to.

The focus within these definitions is not on the experiences of the performers, but the communication to the audience. This contrasts with the understanding of ritual performances being focused on producing some kind of result or accomplishing some kind of goal for the *performer*. The performance therefore cannot be understood as existing not only in the persons acting it, but in the audience and the other ‘players’ that must understand and interpret the performance *as* a performance. Current ideas about analysis of events “as” performance, whether or not they conventionally fit the description of what “is” performance are predominantly shaped by Richard Schechner’s theories on performance and how to study it.

Richard Schechner offers a fluid and encompassing definition of performance which will be central to my use of the term:

...performance – as distinct from any of its subgenres like theatre, dance, music, and performance art – is a broad spectrum of activities including at the very least the performing arts, rituals, healing, sports, popular entertainments, and performance in everyday life. (Schechner 2004 p.7)

This wide range of possible performance types shows the encompassing possibilities of performance studies, allowing theorists to look at nearly any social action as a type of performance. This may seem broad and unwieldy; if everything is performance, where are the

limits of study? What must be understood is that the origin of what is accepted as “performance” within a society is only such because of particular social and cultural factors defining it as such.

Rituals, play and games, and the roles of everyday life are performances because convention, context, usage and tradition say so. One cannot determine what ‘is’ a performance without referring to specific cultural circumstances. There is nothing inherent in an action in itself that makes it a performance or disqualifies it from being a performance. (Schechner 2002 p.30)

This fluidity and contextualization within specific cultural circumstances allows the consideration of a wide range of events “as” performance, regardless of whether it “is” conventional performance; the difference here is that “[w]hat ‘is’ or ‘is not’ performance does not depend on an event in itself but on how that event is received and placed... Any behaviour, event, action, or thing can be studied ‘as’ performance, can be analysed in terms of doing, behaving, and showing” (Schechner 2002 pp.31-32). In regards to Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School, it is billed partly as a burlesque performance and partly as a life-drawing session. This combination advertising is accurate to the layout of the event, and invites two different modes of analysis – that of the event as a form of “class” or participatory event, and that as a “performance”. What I will show within this dissertation is how both parts of the event, the art-creation and the formal performance, can be analysed “as” performance, whether or not it is acknowledged by all involved that the form “is” performance.

In regards to Dr Sketchy’s, the conventions of performance for both on-stage performers and the audience are complicated and multi-layered. In order for the night to be fully successful, the audience must react favourably to the burlesque performance section, “favourably” here suggesting cheering and applause as well as performing the role of the artist when the model is posing, which necessitates more concentration on the creation of art and much less on

affirming the performance of the model. Equally, the performer must enact the two roles clearly, and adhere to the expectations of the audience, in that the performer will partially undress during the burlesque performance, and will stay still while modelling. This is a simplification of the experiences, but is useful to highlight the way that the conventions of performance structure not only the performance but the reception, and how it is in the meeting of the two that a “successful” performance is made.

The performance of the audience, either as spectators or art-creators, includes some sense of *communitas* as described by Victor Turner. Turner’s discussion of ritual performance also encompasses the idea of *communitas*, that is, the feeling of transcendent connectedness felt by participants, joining them in group experience (Turner 1982 pp.45-46). This is related to liminality and the separation of participants from their ordinary roles, allowing them to ignore borders that otherwise would hinder the communal feeling, and experience *communitas* as part of the “anti-structure” of the ritual or performance. Anti-structure is how Turner describes the setting of performance, as it is outside the structure of everyday life, but still holds within itself an understanding of the borders of social groups or expectations; these normative constraints are acknowledged but loosened in order to allow the participants creativity and some escape from the everyday problems of inhabiting their ordinary social roles (Turner 1982 p.44). The audience at a performance or ritual feels united by their position and intentions, in their ability to read cues and conventions of the event, and are for the most part treated as equals. At Dr Sketchy’s though many of the audience members are personally known by organizers and on-stage performers there is no preferential treatment exhibited thus far during the event, which if evident could tarnish the engagement of new or otherwise unknown participants (Observation notes, researcher’s own). This relates to Schechner’s delineation between the “accidental” and “integral audience”;

An accidental audience is a group of people who, individually or in small clusters, go to the theater – the performances are publically advertised and open to all. On opening nights of commercial shows the attendance of the critics and friends constitutes an integral rather than an accidental audience. An integral audience is one where people come because they have to or because the event is of special significance to them. Integral audiences include the relatives of the bride and groom at a wedding, the tribe assembled for initiation rites, dignitaries on the podium for an inauguration. Avant-garde performers who send out mailings or who gather audiences mostly of people who have attended previous performances are in the process of creating an integral audience for their work, a supportive audience. Every “artistic community” develops an integral audience: people who know each other, are involved with each other, support each other. (Schechner 1988 p. 220)

Much of the audience at Dr Sketchy’s Christchurch can be classed as “integral” members, those I would class as “regulars” and who often know the organizers or models personally. The “accidental” audience often shift into the integral role after beginning to attend the event as they make connections with other audience members and engage in the *communitas* fostered by the other integral members. The *communitas* of the audience and the shift to an integral position is encouraged by the reference to the audience by the Christchurch Headmistress Tawdry Trainwreck and the creator Molly Crabapple as “Art Monkeys”. This aligns itself with one of Turner’s main signifiers of liminal *communitas*, the removal of status and individuality through the removal of names and through the uniformity of dress – exhibited in Dr Sketchy’s through the costumed nature of many of the attendees. The most important effect of this sense of *communitas* in Dr Sketchy’s is the acceptance of all participants as authentic artists, regardless of their status outside of the event. Every attendee has equal position as “Art Monkey” regardless of training or ability, and regardless of whether their position in the audience can be classed as integral or accidental.

It is also necessary to give some consideration to feminist theories of performance, not only because neo-burlesque is a female-dominated genre, but because many of the influences on the genre come from the wider feminist movement. Feminist art, particularly body performance, is a huge influence on neo-burlesque and on the way neo-burlesque is understood by those viewing and participating in it. Neo-burlesque is defined as the modern burlesque revival, which integrates classic burlesque styles with contemporary culture, moral sensibilities and an awareness of the feminist movement. Neo-burlesque will be defined in a more detailed manner in the next chapter, but it is crucial to highlight that as a whole the genre identifies itself as a contributing part of the feminist movement and feminist performance art.

The female form has been a focus of fine art for centuries, but the use of the female figure in body performance by female artists offered an alternative understanding of female representation in art; “Women’s body performance of the 1960s and 1970s attempted to create alternative images of the female body, making visible what had been historically excluded or veiled in traditional art and claiming back the right to self-representation” (Willson 2008 p. 56). This alternative included the figure of the female nude, long a symbol of high art practice and the focus of a “male gaze”, though bereft of overt sexual symbolism. Some feminist performance artists “attempt to evade the power hierarchy that cultural feminists find explicit in representations of women by separating images of the female nude from sexual desire” (Dolan 1987 p. 160), but others embraced this hierarchy, exposing it through representations of the nude female form as a sexual or sexually framed figure, often in ways that disrupted the “male gaze” and transgressed the framing of the Neo-Classical fine art perception of the female nude. Another disruption that began occurring within performance art was the inclusion of the performer as a speaker rather than a silent subject.

Confronting this long-established system of representation, a central concern of women's performance art of the 1980s and early 1990s was the establishment of the women performer as a speaking subject – a phenomenon that this system denies. The British performance artist Catherine Elwes has argued that live performance, in which the traditional male gaze of the spectator can be returned or at least challenged or made problematic, offers possibilities for disruption of the conventional system of spectatorship which are impossible in representations offering permanently fixed and objectified images of women, such as the cinema, painting, or sculpture. (Carlson 2004 p. 185)

This possibility for interaction and returning the gaze of the viewer can be identified as a key part of the burlesque tradition, particularly with Gypsy Rose Lee who was known for her satirical and pointed commentary to her striptease, allowing her to be dubbed the “Intellectual Stripper”. This return of gaze and disruption of the representational system is continued in neo-burlesque, though there is often little direct discussion with the audience the roles and symbols parodied within the burlesque performance act in disruption of the usual understandings and expectations of the audience. The concept of burlesque as empowering for both the performers and the audience also challenge the idea of the male gaze and male representation of the female body; much of the audience for any burlesque show is female and the performers themselves often see their performances as empowering and representative of their rights and abilities as independent females.

I must here define what I am referring to when I discuss the “gaze”. The gaze is more than the simple line of sight from the viewer to the viewed, and in film and theatre studies has been discussed as being a particularly gendered thing with a complex background of cultural expectations and framing. Laura Mulvey is the most relevant theorist for discussing the gaze as focused on the female body in performance, though her focus was film rather than live performances.

In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness. (Mulvey 1998 p. 272)

This imbalance is still evident in film and other performance styles, though there has been much discussion over whether there can now be something understood as the “female gaze”, or whether the concept of the gaze itself is inherently tied to “maleness” (Doane 1999). When discussing the representation of women in performance this gaze must be acknowledged, and the position of “woman” as a specific, culturally constructed category within Western theatrical frameworks must be explored.

Woman constitutes the position of object, a position of other in relation to a socially-dominant male subject; it is that ‘otherness’ which makes representation possible (the personification of male desire). Precisely because of the operation of representation, actual women are rendered an absence within the dominant culture, and in order to speak, must either take on a mask (masculinity, falsity, simulation, seduction), or take on the unmasking of the very opposition in which they are the opposed, the Other. (Forte 1998 p. 237)

Within burlesque there is an opportunity for women to do just this; to take on a mask and/or unmask the opposition occurring, embracing the parodic elements of the genre and re-presenting their “otherness” within the framework of satire and female impersonation. Many burlesque performers class themselves as “female impersonators” though they may be biologically female; here we can identify one way in which the performers “take on” but pervert the understanding of the “woman” as object – an understanding central to the format of the life drawing class.

Particularly interesting for the study of Dr Sketchy's is Goffman's discussion of the use of "sign equipment" and what he describes as part of the "mask of manner" held in place on the body through physical items such as dress and artificial elements such as hair dye; these work to signify the ideal character being portrayed and identified through the visual image of the person (Goffman 1959 p.50). Goffman again sees this as a character consciously played over the basic identity. The "sign equipment" identifiable within Dr Sketchy's are most directly related to the dress of the models, and to the materials used by the audience. When discussing burlesque a recurring object of identification is the pastie (a nipple covering of some description) which is commonly understood as the main visual marker of difference between the burlesque dancer and the "stripper", allowing a separation of the two categories (Weldon 2010 p.56). Goffman suggests that sign-equipment may be found in several different routines of social performance, with the exception of certain unique and specific exceptions used within only a single type of highly ceremonial routine (Goffman 1959, p.50). I would relate the pastie as one of these unique single-performance objects; this is supported both by the common understanding of the pastie in burlesque literature, but in the way that the pastie itself, when removed from the burlesque performance, is used as a signifier *of* burlesque, emphasising the single connotation of the object.

The sign-equipment of the audience can be identified as the sketchpads and drawing materials they are expected to bring with them to the event; those people that do not come prepared with materials for art creation are often called out by the organizers of the event, being told to beg or borrow supplies off other audience members (Observation notes, researcher's own). Similar situations occur when people may stop drawing throughout the night; the expectation is that all audience members will participate in the art creation and wield the sign equipment related to it, whether or not they have the technical skill to wield the equipment in a traditional art-creation setting. The sketchpads and drawing materials help set

Dr Sketchy's apart from other events that occur in the bar, relating the event to traditional life-drawing sessions, but the setting and the style of performance keep Dr Sketchy's apart from the traditional format, though they share sign-equipment. Without this sign-equipment participants cannot successfully perform the role of "art creator", which is required in order for the performance of the event as a life drawing session to be successful. Further discussion of the audience as art creator will be addressed in the third chapter.

Playing roles and performing in social interactions is central to any public event, but the ways that these roles and performances change and overlap within Dr Sketchy's makes this event a particularly interesting case to study through performance theory. Though much of the theoretical discussion in this brief methodological introduction is simplified, it gives some indication of how these anthropological theories have influenced my view of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, and how I will be looking at the interactions and the event as a whole in terms of performance. It does however represent a starting point, from which I intend to analyse the occurrences and conversations around Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School in order to present an understanding of how the event proves so popular and is able to work so well within diverse social settings and with such a range of participants and performance styles.

CHAPTER TWO: BURLESQUE AND PERFORMANCE

Performance as a concept embraces a range of different genres, styles, meanings and actions. The performance primarily present in Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School is that of burlesque, which comprises the main stage show and part of the advertised event. As well as the performance of burlesque, the same performer acts as a passive, stationery model, and this will be discussed in the context of the life drawing class in the next chapter. The performance on stage is by no means the only performance occurring during the evening; this chapter will explore the history and contemporary performance of burlesque, the genre of performance known as "clowning", and the performance of the audience in their role as spectators. The concept of the audience is primarily one of passivity, absorbing the performance presented to them, but they also act in support or rejection of the performance by their actions and following of conventions of acceptable spectating.

In this chapter I will begin by establishing a loose definition of "burlesque" performance, and will give a brief history of burlesque as a performances genre. This will lead into a discussion of "neo-burlesque" and allow me to situate the contemporary form of burlesque within the appropriate social and artistic context. I will then address the conception of sex and "sexy" which is so central to burlesque, and explore the way performers and audiences express burlesque performances as being "empowering" to those involved, a theme which is also present in discussions of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School. Finally, I will present the roles of the audience and performer within burlesque performance and the performative section of Dr Sketchy's, the "Active Performer/Passive Audience" experience, which will be reversed in the following chapter *Life Drawing and Nude Modelling*.

These various types and levels of performance will be discussed in terms of the anthropological theories of performance of Victor Turner, Richard Schechner and others.

These theories allow me to explore the different levels and types of performance present in Dr Sketchy's and show the ways that they intersect and effect each other, and how they come together to create the working whole that is Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School.

The Golden Age of Burlesque

If you were to look up the term 'burlesque' in a dictionary you would find definitions that emphasize ideas of parody; laughter; bawdiness; vulgarity; satire; caricature. This belies a focus on the low nature of burlesque as it has come from the music hall, theatre and carnival, before the movement away from the comedy routine and towards the nudity, the tease and the glamour of what is now understood as 'burlesque' dancing.

Burlesque has its roots well before the commonly understood burlesque dance or striptease, based in that bawdy comedy and the parody of high culture, but this is outside of the focus of this research. Burlesque dancing as we are more familiar with today evolved from the early inclusion into variety acts of the "leg show" in the 19th century (for an excellent discussion of this period see Allen 1991) and the growing focus on the female body and the chorus girl of the early 1900s, but the period of the "Golden Age" of modern burlesque dancing took place from 1925-1960 (Weldon 2010 p. 257-258). This section will be devoted to a history of burlesque from the Golden Age up to the modern 'neo-burlesque' movement, giving a secure understanding of the place of burlesque and neo-burlesque and the context from which Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School runs in regards to the burlesque community.

The "Golden Age" of burlesque dancing is often identified with the central figures of Gypsy Rose Lee and Sally Rand. Bettie Page acts as the lead figure for pin-up art, and for the fetish community, which is beyond the realm of study here. Sally Rand is known for her elaborate,

ballet-influenced dances with large ostrich feather fans or balloons, combining elements of high performance styles with the showmanship of the earlier troupes of dancers such as the Ziegfeld Girls and Lydia Thompson's British Blondes. In 1933 Rand became an immediate star after performing her fan dance at the Chicago World's Fair, just four years before burlesque was considered so dangerous to the morals of the city of New York that the mayor banned all performances and uses of the word "burlesque" (Baldwin 2004 p. 12). Gypsy Rose Lee began her performance career in 1926, but her influence remained at the forefront of burlesque long after her retirement, thanks to books and movies based on her performing life, and her own involvement in public life.

Gypsy was not the first performer to strip on stage, but she was and is one of the most well known. Her act was not a silent striptease or pole dance as is encountered in contemporary strip clubs, but included lengthy poems and narratives told while languidly stripping, often heckling the audience or criticizing them openly while she removed her clothing (Sicherman & Green 1980 pp. 411-413). Her first strip is immortalized in stage shows and movies, the seemingly modest wrapping of herself in the curtains of the stage before throwing her garter to the crowd becoming part of her signature; the idea that the strip was all about the tease, not the reveal, was part of the Gypsy legacy. The most significant legacy she created was her reputation for cleverness and wit as the 'intellectual stripper';

"With 'star' strippers like Gypsy Rose Lee, it was not purely about the 'strip' or about the 'script'. It was not just the sexual allure of their bodies that was seen to be alarming but, more provocatively, the performer's ability to address their audience directly". (Willson 2008 p. 21)

This direct address to the audience allowed Gypsy and other burlesque performers to talk back to the audience, engaging them on a different level than the previous silent female roles. The British Blondes led by Lydia Thompson were known for their political and social

commentary and jokes throughout their performances, changing the scripts to include current affairs and items of interest that they could satirize.

The “death” of burlesque has been claimed at various times, but the genre has never completely vanished, only changed itself to fit what society needs in terms of entertainment. The Golden Age of burlesque can be said to have ended during the 1960s, when censorship loosened and nudity and sex became more public and available. What is often claimed as the reason for the death of burlesque is the rise of topless bars, strip clubs offering full nudity, and pornographic publications such as Playboy. These formats offered previously unknown access to the naked female form in both social settings and the comfort of home, and with concepts such as “free love” influencing public ideas about the expression of sexuality burlesque, in its classic form, fell out of favour.

Classic burlesque offered a tease and titillation, without offering anything as blatant as physical satisfaction. Strip clubs and pornography dispensed with the tease and offered full-frontal access to the realm of sexuality only hinted at by burlesque. In the mid-90s burlesque began to surface again, with theatres devoted to burlesque and both travelling and house troupes of dancers performing around the United States. Regaining popularity in the 90s meant finding ways of drawing crowds away from the range of modern entertainments, both electronic and live, and distinguishing the performance of burlesque from strip clubs and pornography. This required a new angle to the performance, a new target audience and an updated message to present. As such, modern burlesque is often referred to as “Neo-Burlesque” to distinguish it from the classic form of the previous era.

Neo-Burlesque

The birth of the new burlesque seemed to spring, fully formed, from the heads of one hundred new feminists. In what can only be described as a moment of collective subconscious, these young women, whose mothers had burned their bras, discovered that they actually liked their bras and thought they might look lovely covered in sequins, taken off, and tossed into the stage lights. (Baldwin 2004 p. 47)

Neo-burlesque as a movement takes its inspiration and main influences from the Golden Age of burlesque dancing, but tempers this with influences from a range of other sources, such as feminist art and politics, performance art, and pop culture. Neo-Burlesque takes the form and concept of the burlesque as a parody of contemporary society but necessarily updates the focus in order to remain relevant and entertaining in the contemporary post-pornography, strip-club era, when female nudity is commonplace and experienced in a wide range of situations (Baldwin 2004 p. 38). This updating includes the adoption and parody of traditional routines and sketches in a nostalgic commentary on both the era in which the routines were first exhibited, and the contemporary understandings of femininity and social routine that can be compared or insinuated. For example, classic routines often show the performer in a voyeuristic “private” setting such as dressing/undressing or in the bath. Contemporary performances may use this setting to exhibit behaviours different than can be expected in such a position, or may transplant the behaviours associated with the setting to a different, more public scene. Alternatively, the scene and behaviours may conform to the classic format, but even this faithful recreation is a commentary of sorts – a nostalgic homage to a performance style that was itself a play on gender, class and “private” behaviour. Even in 1930 it is unlikely women performed a choreographed aerobic routine in undressing for the bath.

Neo-burlesque in Christchurch is limited but not non-existent. Along with attending Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School regularly I have attended a range of other burlesque shows performed in Christchurch and keep abreast of trends and current events within the New Zealand, Australian and worldwide burlesque communities. Much of this information is filtered through regional burlesque appreciation Facebook pages and independent websites, as well as through performers themselves advertising and discussing their trade online and in media releases. With this exposure to the genre I was able to judge performances within Dr Sketchy's within the local performance context and within the international context of the wider genre. Though the performers at Dr Sketchy's are classed as amateur, often performing burlesque for the first time at the event, they must hold some general knowledge of the genre in order to perform it, and being able to identify the inspirations behind certain styles of performance has been central to my ability to evaluate and discuss the performances presented at Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School.

Neo-burlesque is commonly recognized by a dedication to extravagant costumes, sets and performances, elaborate themes and highly polished presentation. This is expected of the highest-level performances, while the more amateur performances work with a smaller budget to produce what almost seem to be homages to the more extravagant professional performances. Whether the performance is professional or amateur, the same format and signifiers are used, and both performers and audience follow the same conventions at each level. The signifiers are particularly interesting, as regardless to a person's exposure to actual burlesque performances, there is a cultural understanding of what the corset, the opera glove, the garter belt and the nipple tassels represent. They have often been used in contemporary pop culture and media to represent the sex trade and the "risqué" without showing nudity.

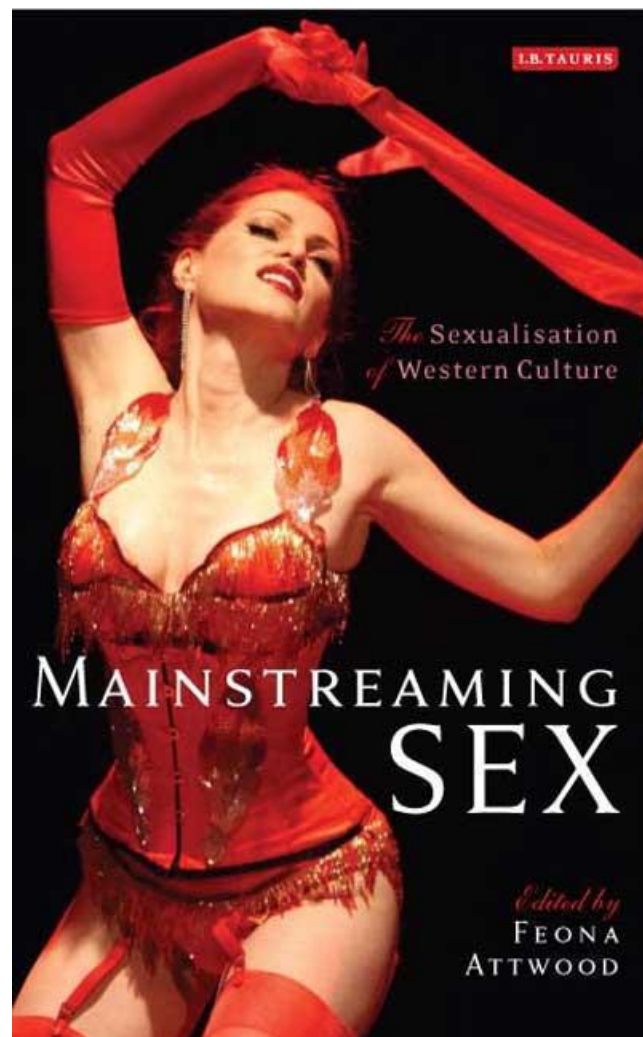


Figure 1: Jo Weldon, cover of *Mainstreaming Sex*, Feona Attwood 2010

The 2010 volume *Mainstreaming Sex* edited by Feona Attwood is an excellent example of this; though the volume addresses various representations of sexualization in modern Western culture, burlesque is mentioned only in passing during a discussion of pole-dancing fitness classes. The cover illustration, however, presents the burlesque dancer Jo “Boobs” Weldon in a red sequined corset and garter belt, peeling off a long red opera glove. This ability for burlesque to stand *in place of* sex necessarily adds to our reading of performances and performers. Whatever the theme or the content of the performance, as burlesque it is understood as within the frame of “sex” or “sexy”, with other signifiers and commentary from within the performance laid on that groundwork.

Sex and Empowerment

The frame of “sex” or “sexy” in performance is usually focused on the female body. The position of women in burlesque performance can be described as “empowering”, but the use of the female body always brings connotations of the male gaze (see Mulvey 1999) and subordination to a male audience. Women in performance through history have been related to other ways a woman may “sell her body” for profit or entertainment, always with the expectation of a male audience/consumer.

[T]he identity of the female performer in the United States had, since the 19th century, fit neatly into the category of the “public woman”, or prostitute. In fact, it was not until late in the first half of the 19th century that actresses began to gain recognition as either performers or theatre consumers, largely due to lingering associations of the actress with prostitution. (Buszek 1999 p. 145)

The concept of a female putting herself “on show”, regardless of the format, was seen as equivalent or at very least the first step towards prostitution. Though this is no longer a common opinion towards female actors and other performers, the connection between burlesque, stripping, and prostitution is still evident today. One way which burlesque sets itself against this idea is in the ideas of feminism/female empowerment; the other is in the barrier built between burlesque and stripping, which will be discussed further below. The empowerment of not only the female performers but of female audience members is part of this barrier built.

The barrier between burlesque and what we can call stripping – that is, the performance of a strip for the direct pleasure of a male audience within the confines of a strip club, with the potential for other activities such as lap dancing and pole dancing – is a socially constructed

one, with the distance between the activities often reliant only on the personal opinions of those engaged with one or the other. Many burlesque performers would regard what they do to be very distinct from stripping in the contemporary sense (Baldwin 2004 p. 50), but there are those who do not see the activities as particularly different (Weldon 2010 pp. 221-222). Commonly burlesque is understood as more artistic and less focused on the pleasure of a male audience; for many performing burlesque is an empowering activity, while stripping is an oppressive occupation, subject to male fantasies and male gazes. There have been several academic studies on the subject of stripping and the relations between stripper and their customers, as well as with the general public (Frank 2002; Liepe-Levinson 2002). Stripping and burlesque are kept separate by many with a focus on the power relations between performer and audience, the concept of burlesque displaying a “talent” or skill outside of “just stripping”, and the conception of difference between people who perform in each discipline, notable for the emphatic statement that burlesque performers are or represent “*real women*”.

The exhibition of skill in burlesque can be extravagant and unusual and act as the focus of the event, or it may be mild and merely as a precursor to the striptease. The striptease itself can be constructed as part of this “talent”; to be able to engage the audience with choreographed movements and graceful removal of clothing is something thousands of women worldwide attend burlesque workshops and classes to gain insight on (Willson 2008 p. 4). In comparison, the type of stripping that occurs in a strip club or bar is often discussed as “just stripping”, or characterized by the use of the pole in dance. Pole dancing is a key symbol of the strip club as a piece of equipment rarely found in other locations, and always reminiscent of sexual display, usually by women. This is how phrases such as “keeping it off the pole” (Hells Belle Interview, 9/9/11) become part of the vernacular when discussing burlesque; keeping the two genres separate is seen as important to some of those engaged with

burlesque, as they do not wish association with such a politically charged genre of performance. The movement of the stripper's pole or pole dance into mainstream situations complicates this fact further. Pole dancing is now offered in many places as fitness routine, as the use of the pole requires significant upper and lower body strength (Holland & Attwood 2010 pp.165-166), and pole dance competitions are held worldwide, encouraging the idea that this is a skill that takes training and dedication similar to other aerobic or acrobatic sports (www.worldpoledance.com). The movement of the pole into mainstream situations is accompanied by use of language and concepts we can otherwise associate with burlesque: the empowerment of women and the "taking back" of sexuality.

The idea of burlesque as empowering is often vocalized by those who perform it, framing their experiences within concepts of feminism and freedom to express themselves (Willson 2008 pp. 10-11). Much of this freedom is related to the power relations and the male gaze discussed above; neo-burlesque can be classified as "by and for women". Performers are usually independent from any kind of manager or agent, and burlesque shows are often organized by women who are part of this performing group. This is not to say the influences of men are non-existent, but they are certainly downplayed in favour of the idea of the independent, self-supporting woman.

Neo-burlesque differs from "old" (or "traditional" or "classic") burlesque because the performances are self-described as feminist, neo-burlesque is not the dominant form of live titillation in contemporary American society, and most importantly, the movement paints itself as being woman-centered. (Mansfield 2006 p.14)

This new burlesque describes itself actively and emphatically as feminist. Those engaging with and performing in neo-burlesque shows consider their engagement as modern women as a feminist one, though their understandings of the feminist movement and feminist values

may in fact be simplified and with little reference; some may base their assumption of the term “feminist” on the perception that neo-burlesque is woman-focused and woman-centred, whether or not they engage in any feminist politics or open discussions. Others of course may class their experiences in terms of their engagement with those politics and discussions whether they occur within or outside of the burlesque itself. Jacki Willson questions whether the “burlesque performer offers up the potential and possibility for women to intervene as ‘knowing’, empowered participants in wider sexual, social and economic relationships and systems? Or are there certain forms of burlesque that open up transgressive potential whilst other forms are seemingly naïve and regressive, strengthening institutions and values that should be questioned?” (Willson 2008 p. 8) While it is not the purpose of this thesis to establish the feminist credentials of those performing and engaging with the form, I must acknowledge the influence of the feminist movements on the content and design of the burlesque show, and particularly on the way the form has evolved from the Golden Age of burlesque.

Women in burlesque are taking what was an art form performed by women but run by men and changing the rules by putting themselves in a place of power and determining how they and other women of the movement are perceived. Burlesque, according to Tara Pontani, “tries to eliminate the objectification of women because women are taking it as their own and reinventing it and creating great performance.” By and large, burlesque is a women’s movement: it’s run by women and it stars women. (Baldwin 2004 p. 48)

Part of this movement towards a “by and for women” standpoint includes separating burlesque from other forms of sexualized entertainment that are much more difficult to align to feminist viewpoints and to women’s interests in general. The separation between burlesque and stripping or pornography is evident in how women in each genre are described, particularly how they are categorized by those engaged in burlesque. A common tagline for

burlesque performances and performers involves the concept of the “real woman”. This “real” woman is set up in opposition to the supposedly “fake” other woman engaged in stripping or pornography. These others are described in terms of their plastic surgery, fake tans, “cheap” appearance, and presumably a fake enjoyment of their performances.

If you're looking for fake tan and plastic perfection, go to a strip club. If you're looking for vintage glamour, sophistication, spectacular entertainment and a little bit of fantasy, see a burlesque show! (www.sugarblueburlesque.com)

This contradicts the popularized edict of the neo-burlesque movement which celebrates “every type of woman”, vocally embraces a wide range of body shapes and styles, discourages plastic surgery – to the point where some troupes will not allow members who have been artificially enhanced as such;

Michelle Carr of the Velvet Hammer has had a long time audition policy: (1) No professional strippers; (2) No fake breasts; (3) No porn stars; and (4) No bad attitude. It’s a very simple formula, and it works. She believes that by only putting natural, non-surgically altered women on the stage can the burlesque aesthetic work. (Baldwin 2004 p. 51)

Troupes and existing burlesque performers also encourage performance for the enjoyment of it, rather than for the exclusive enjoyment of the audience. All of this represents the most commonly vocalized understanding of the difference between burlesque and stripping; many people, both general public and performers, see little to no difference between the genres, but as much is made of the reasons why burlesque is different, I feel the distinction is worthy of comment.

The actual format and content of a neo-burlesque performance depends on the type of venue, the status of the performers, and the event containing the performance. Usually a burlesque bill will contain several different performers, whether as part of a troupe or as independent

performances. In either situation the performance will contain several independent skits or sections, showcasing different performers' acts and different talents; there will often be an attempt to avoid duplication within a set of performances, for example, consciously not planning to have multiple fan dance performances or duplicate music between different performers (Weldon 2010 pp. 213-215). This allows the event to avoid too much competition between the different acts, particularly where the performers do not represent a troupe or organized group. If the event involves a big-name performer as a headlining act, the event will be organized around this, and will likely include several 'opening' or 'warm-up' acts by lower ranked performers, designed to compliment the main performance. Individual burlesque performances are short, usually running between 5-15 minutes, tending towards the longer timeframe if it includes an activity requiring a high amount of skill, such as hoop tricks, fire work (i.e. twirling or eating), or some form of acrobatics. The shorter acts will focus more exclusively on the striptease itself, rather than on the skilled execution of other performance styles.

Within Dr Sketchy's performers are expected to give two to three performances throughout the evening, of varying styles according to the theme of the event and the skills of the performer. On only one occasion at Dr Sketchy's Christchurch has there been a performance from someone other than the person also responsible for the main modelling during the evening; at the October 2010 session a local body suspension company performed a basic suspension as one of the performances, and also posed for some of the timed poses. This was unusual as they were not the main performers/models, but they were included for part of the event as a special feature due to the skills they were able to display. The standard format seems to be that within a normal Dr Sketchy's event there will be at least one performance in each of the first and second half of the night, whether this is the very first entrance for the performer, in the middle of the section, or as a finishing piece to that half seems to be reliant

only on the plans of the performer and the associated costuming. As the performer proceeds through the performances layers of clothing are removed, meaning modelling poses after a performance will feature a different costume or simply less of it. By the end of the night the performer is usually clad in only pasties and underwear, and often there are several poses in this limited costume before the night is concluded. More will be discussed regarding the importance of the costuming and sign equipment in the third chapter; for now I will move to acknowledge the audience of the burlesque.

Burlesque performances often feature a predominantly female audience, particularly if the performers are well-known. Local burlesque, such as that found in Christchurch, is likely to draw an audience from friends of performers, similar performer networks that have considerable overlap, and admirers of burlesque, as well as those casual audience members who attend simply for something to do on a night out. Theories regarding the reason for the popularity of burlesque to female audiences relate to some of the details discussed above, particularly the concept of neo-burlesque as an empowering representation of female sexuality. Those admirers who attend may engage in similar nostalgic representation as the performers in dressing in styles reminiscent of the 1950s and the glamorized femininity portrayed as such; dress in the audience for burlesque is identifiably much more formal and focused on these style influences and often features reproduction 1950s dresses and hairstyles (Baldwin 2004, p. 129).

According to The World Famous *BOB*, men and women love watching burlesque because, “Women see it and they feel empowered and guys see it and they feel that this is something new, it’s not just another strip club. I’ve talked to some guys and they’re usually into it for two reasons: one, they appreciate the thought behind the actual presentation, and two they like to see boobs.” Burlesque isn’t like anything else found in modern entertainment. It’s not like going to the theater, but it has those elements. It’s not like seeing a band, but

there is music. It's related to going to a strip club, but the sexuality isn't as blatant. It helps that the entertainment has a sexy payoff, but a lot of the appeal of new burlesque is that it is unique, but audiences can still relate to it. (Baldwin 2004 pp. 125-126)

This history of burlesque has been focused, by necessity, on America and Europe. Burlesque in Christchurch is on a small scale, consisting of two small troupes and a few solo performers, most of whom have a Circus training background. This is the form that burlesque takes world over, and how most performers exist; burlesque is not something that offers a sustainable income for the majority of performers, one common comment relating the fact that burlesque performers tend to put everything they make back into their shows and their costumes, spending in order to perform rather than making a profit (Weldon 2010 p. 205). Burlesque in Christchurch has been gaining more publicity and more regular performance opportunities alongside Dr Sketchy's rather than against it, and has offered the opportunity to many amateur performers to debut their new acts or begin their career with a performance for the event. Through this Dr Sketchy's is directly tied to the local burlesque community, and though they are not the focus of this thesis, many of the people involved come from this background and with an understanding of the concepts behind burlesque. Burlesque is a central part of Dr Sketchy's for both performers and audiences, and giving full context for the cultural understandings of what it means to be a "burlesque event" is crucial to understanding how Dr Sketchy's is run and experienced. Not every audience member has personal experience of burlesque performance, but the most basic understanding of what burlesque means – sex and striptease – is part of the general cultural knowledge held by those who attend the event. The different background experiences of the audience members regarding burlesque and life drawing will be discussed as much as is possible with the sample of audience members interviewed, both in this chapter and the next.

The following sections have been split into “Active Performing” and “Passive Spectating”. I see these two roles as complimentary, and making up one of the dualities of performance that I am focusing on within this event. The “Active Performing” addressed here is the performance of burlesque on the stage of Dr Sketchy’s; this is the active performance advertised for the event, and has clear construction as a performance to be watched by the audience. That audience is engaged in “Passive spectating”, though I admit this assertion is misleading – the audience are conforming to particular codes of conduct for spectating which are more active than found at many other genres of performance such as traditional theatre, but are passive in that they are not the focus of attention during the burlesque portion of the event. Their presence and participation are not necessary for the performance on stage to continue, whereas their participation is necessary in regards to the life drawing segment of the evening, where they become the focus of activity and the model slips into a more passive role. All of these roles have the potential to be examined as performance, but I have chosen to emphasise this duality of active/passive in order to highlight the different focuses of the two genres of burlesque and life drawing. This duality is in direct comparison to the topic of the next chapter, which addresses the “Passive Performing” of the stationary model on stage, and the “Active Spectating” of the audience-as-artist, engaged in art creation and activity. All of these roles, passive and active, can be explored as a type of performance. It is these different performances and the conflict that *should* exist between them that is the central focus of this thesis, and the comparisons will be given further treatment later. For now, attention will be focused towards establishing “Active Performing” and “Passive Spectating” as the first duality present.

Active Performing

As part of a franchised format, performances at Dr Sketchy's Christchurch are fairly typical when compared to other branches of Dr Sketchy's around the world, and are closely related to both life drawing and burlesque performance formats. Each performer gives two or three different short acts structured around their stationary modelling with the performances acting as a break for both the model and audience in their activities. As Dr Sketchy's is a monthly event and each month has different performer/s and themes, the performances themselves have been of different types, skills, and styles, including fan dances, hula-hooping, skit performance, and the classic striptease. Each performer displays different personal styles and presents a performance shaped around the theme; for example, in the Beach themed event the model stripped down to first a bathing suit and then a bikini; in the Gore themed event the main models presented a "Frankenstein's Monster" themed skit which incorporated a striptease. In every performance there is an element of the striptease, though the endpoint of that strip is defined by what the performer is comfortable with, whether that be a bra, pasties, or bare breasts. As yet there have been mostly female performers at the Christchurch branch, with all but one male performer/model having a female partner as the focus. This is consistent with other Dr Sketchy's branches and burlesque more generally; though there is a genre referred to as "Boylesque" there are fewer male performers than female, and male performers are rarely solo acts. Though there has been one solo male performance at Dr Sketchy's Christchurch, I will focus predominantly on the female performances due to their majority status. This gender division translates to the audience as there are more women attending than men, though the gender divide is more balanced than among the performers. Something that becomes clear from this division is that there are distinct power relations present relating to gender and the performance format itself.

Power relations are central to all human interaction, and within stage performances there is a distinct separation between those in power – on stage, controlling what is being presented – and those in the audience, passively consuming the performance. A performance is “given” and the audience “takes” something from that, whether it is what is intended or not. This power is exhibited through the codes of conduct the audience and performer are supposed to adhere to, and here one of the complications arises. As expressed in the above history, the bodies of performing women have very rarely been their own, particularly regarding erotic performance of the strip or striptease. The position and use of power within Dr Sketchy’s is directly controlled by the women who organize it. The organizing staff, particularly the Headmistress Tawdry Trainwreck (Audrey Baldwin) and MC Hells Belle, are in direct positions of power as those whom everyone, audience and performer, must listen to and follow. Part of their duty is the maintaining and encouraging of certain power relations between the performer and audience, notably in the performer’s favour. Both when performing and when modelling, the performer hired for the event is given executive power over their presentation and access by the audience; it is they who decide how far to strip, how to pose, what attention and interaction they will allow by the audience. When discussing power relations with Audrey Baldwin, she recounted an encounter during a Dr Sketchy’s event I had been unable to attend.

We'd always say that the model, they can act however they like, we don't want them to be some mute powerless muse, we want them to inject some of their personality into the poses and into what they do, and I mean, I think we only ever had one sort of negative experience where some, at the end of the retro-sci-fi night a bunch of metal, like there was a metal gig after us and all of those guys came in early before we cleared out, and they were kind of like heckling the model, but we were kind of like no no, you feel free to swear at them or do whatever the hell you want. And we kind of did our best to be like "no guys, that

is unacceptable", so we definitely encourage the model to be strong, yeah, and I think also just the crew we're all very aware of it. (Audrey, interview, 17/5/2011)

This situation clearly highlights the power intentionally given to the model and the support given by the all-female organizational crew to allow the model to react to negative behaviour in any manner they deem appropriate. Though the organizational team is ultimately in charge of the event, power over the audience and their reactions and interactions is visibly handed over to the model for the duration of the event. This positioning of power is possible due to the atmosphere of the event and the way it is presented; the organizers intentionally produce a setting in which people may feel comfortable interacting casually, while ensuring the power is placed with the on-stage performer during both performance and modelling.

This positioning of power is not unique to the Christchurch branch of Dr Sketchy's, but is part of the format licensed by the founding branch of Dr Sketchy's in New York, and by the founder Molly Crabapple. Molly has stated on several occasions that part of the original inspiration for creating Dr Sketchy's in 2005 was her experiences as an artist's model and burlesque performer. "I wanted to do a session that would celebrate the model" (New York Times 4 October 2009). This is also not unique to Dr Sketchy's in terms of power relations in performance. In neo-burlesque performances power over presentation and interaction is usually in the hands of the performer or the event organizer, roles predominantly held by women in contemporary burlesque. Traditionally (as in the Golden Age of burlesque and in other performance genres) the female body has been under the power of the male producer or spectator. This aligns with the traditional power relations within life drawing classes or sessions, which assume a female model and predominantly male artist/s. The power relations in this format have a specific history, which will be explored in the next chapter.

The role of the stage performer at Dr Sketchy's is to present several short, entertaining burlesque-style performances, as well as to hold poses for an agreed length of time so the

audience may sketch them. Photographs from the event will be placed online and the audience will take away with them many drawings of the model for personal use, so the model/performer must agree to this kind of exposure in the context of the show. When discussing with models/performers from Dr Sketchy's they acknowledged the dual role they play as both performer and model for the show, and had trouble separating the two; their role within Sketchy's is defined by this duality and they cannot perform one without the other in this context. Within their burlesque performance however there were certain acknowledgements of their limits and what they wished to present. Regarding her debut performance, Princess discusses some of the framing inherent in her preparations;

[L]ike I said I've seen other performances before and I sort of knew what kind of stuff I needed to do or like where to draw that line that I wasn't just a stripper, cause, like Hells was talking about that and it's quite important to me to.
(Princess Interview 9/9/11)

More will be discussed regarding the separation between burlesque and the strip club in further chapters. I will move now to establish the role of the spectator within the performance situation at Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School.

Passive Spectating

The role of the audience in performance has been acknowledged. What remains to be explored is how the audience at this event reacts and interacts with the performance, and how this compares with the existing literature on audiences and reception studies. There is very little in terms of direct audience studies outside of traditionally structured theatre performances, but I will draw on studies from the fields of performance and theatre studies to discuss the actions of the audience as spectators. The audience at Dr Sketchy's plays two

roles, that of spectator, and that of artist. Their activity as art creators will be explored in the next chapter; for now I will look at the actions of the audience as spectators of the burlesque performance and general understandings of group behaviour and reception.

Each month between 40 and 60 people attend Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School in Christchurch as audience members and art creators, purchasing tickets online and through nominated stores for this privilege. The majority of the evening is spent engaged in drawing while the model poses, but periodically throughout the evening the model will perform a routine as outlined above, and the audience will shift their role from artist to spectator. When the model performs and the audience observes, there are certain conventions and understandings about the role of the spectator in this relationship, and the behaviour that is accepted, encouraged or discouraged. Though the power in this performance lies with the performer over the audience, there is still some reciprocal interaction in terms of supportive audience reactions, the amount of attention given to the performance over any other distractions, and applause at the end.

The average audience at Dr Sketchy's in Christchurch is a mix of ages, with significant appeal amongst the 25-35 age group. When discussing the kind of people who attend Dr Sketchy's, Audrey Baldwin noted:

I was really interested to find that it's actually a lot of, the age groups are really different? we have I think a lot of between, sort of like 25-40 is actually our main demographic, females, we get, yeah we get less kind of art students than I expected, possibly because at Polytech they have life drawing classes already, and at Fine Arts they're too busy or we don't offer free wine? I definitely think that our audiences are, they're not your average run of the mill kind of like, go to I don't know, like shit bars, like they're not the found going to the [local dive bar]. They're a bit more, like, I think our art monkeys are discerning? Like they're not the kind of people to come and get really trashed and be obnoxious,

they're actually cultured, open-minded kind of people. (Audrey, Interview 17/5/2011)

Here Audrey distinguishes between the kind of people who she perceives attends Dr Sketchy's, and those who can be found in less 'cultured' environments such as disreputable bars. This perception of Dr Sketchy's as a more 'cultured' alternative to such venues, drawing a more educated, older and better-behaved crowd places Dr Sketchy's in a position of being more 'high culture' than simply going out to drink. Though drinking is expected to be part of the evening's activities, and is encouraged, it is the combination of drinking, performance and art that gives Dr Sketchy's a unique position; the tagline "Drinking and Drawing" is part of the Dr Sketchy's trademark.

Despite the encouragement to drink during the evening, the focus stays firmly on the performance space rather than the bar, and in the venues used for the Christchurch branch of Dr Sketchy's seats are usually arranged to almost entirely exclude the bar alongside the performance space, making it moderately difficult for patrons to access the bar, particularly during poses and performances when people are seated in the way. Intermissions and short breaks give an opportunity for audience members to refresh their drinks, but the arrangement of space makes both disruption of the performance and overindulging in alcohol difficult.

This could be compared to the focus of an audience at another type of performance with an exclusive audience of ticket holders rather than a general flow of patrons more usually located in the bar, such as a live band or concert, but I believe the physical exclusion of the bar from the main social area by the erection of seating so that the audience has their backs to the bar is more extreme than what would usually be found at a concert. The focus on time and time limits – timed poses, timed performances (limited by choreography and music), timed intermissions – means few audience members wander during the hours Dr Sketchy is in session, and those who regularly attend often have established favoured seating areas

according to their needs, whether that be near the bar, the bathrooms or the door. The focus and limitations of movement far exceed any I have seen at other events situated in bars, but may perhaps have some equivalent within sports arenas and other larger, less intimate settings that are also closely delineated by timed sections.

The way the audience interacts with each other and the burlesque performance is still only one aspect of the experience at Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School. The audience also interact with each other as art creators attending a life drawing session, and understand that they view not only a performer, but a life model for their scrutiny and use as a physical art reference. In this chapter I have discussed the history of the burlesque genre of performance and related it to the conception of sex and empowerment within traditional and neo-burlesque, and within the particular form of burlesque performed at Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School. This presents a clear historical context for the style of performance central to this thesis, and has focused on the performer as an active figure in collaboration with a receptive audience. Burlesque performance is only one part of the evening, though it is the most obviously performative part of a Dr Sketchy's event. The next chapter will continue the exploration of the central formats present in Dr Sketchy's by turning to the history of the life drawing class and the other roles performed by those involved with Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School.

CHAPTER THREE: LIFE DRAWING AND NUDE MODELLING

Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School is primarily known as an event built around and in opposition to the tradition of life drawing classes in institutional art education. This chapter will address the history of this tradition and the social and symbolic understandings of this tradition and the art that has been produced from it. The consideration of the nude in art is the primary focus of the following chapter, and as such I will aim to establish a historical and practical context for that discussion in this chapter. Under study here will be the comparison of Dr Sketchy's with the established formal life drawing class, and the ways the roles and positions of power associated with the latter may be subverted in this new format. I will also address pornography and the relationship between pornography and high art, particularly what distinguishes the two genres and how Dr Sketchy's relates to both forms. This will be done by an exploration of the relationship between the model and the artist, the passive subject and the active creator of authentically accepted art. This also acts as a contrast to the previous chapter's discussion of the active performer and passive spectator. Important within this discussion is the holding of power and the relationship between the model and artist, and as part of this the role of the organizers in creating and maintaining the power relations within the event will be explored. All of this, though, must rest on a solid historical context of the traditional life drawing class, and the relations and understandings of that event and the performances within it.

History of Life Drawing

Drawing from life has been a feature of art education since at least the Classical period. Through changes in artistic inclinations over periods of time it has fallen in and out of favour

in terms of personal practice and institutional use, but it is still considered the best tool for learning to draw the human figure. The form of the life drawing class institutionally and the social understanding of what was involved in this activity from a moral standpoint have also changed over time, but the negative connotations of the publicly exposed naked female body have only diminished, not disappeared entirely. I will offer here a brief history of the life drawing class in art education institutions, with a focus on Britain and America supporting a discussion of the history of drawing from life in New Zealand. This history offers a context for approaching Dr Sketchy's as an artistic event, and will be addressed in terms of another representation of the naked female form in society – pornography – before I address the event of Dr Sketchy's itself. The understanding of the nude body in art, pornography, and the physical presence of the naked body in the life drawing class offer different problems in terms of the morals of the wider social sphere. These problems will be outlined here before being expanded upon in comparison to the understandings of nudity in performance in the next chapter.

Since the 17th Century the female nude can be considered the dominant image in European art and in life drawing, but it was not always so (Clark 1956 p. 65). Previously the male nude was seen as the epitome of physical representation and the ideal form for replication in art. The shift to the female form is based on understandings of the feminine as vessel for representing the abstract, the natural and the ideal (Nead 1992 p. 25). The actual process of drawing the female form from life, however, was always wrought with moral and practical problems. The acquiring of models for life drawing, the situation in which the drawing was done, and the form the final artistic product took all had certain social and cultural understandings surrounding them. The complete history of views towards life modelling and the nude in art is not required for this study, but the history contemporary to that presented in the previous chapter on performance, the 19th and 20th centuries, is necessary. Many of the

reputable sources regarding life drawing as an institutionalized practice focus on the 19th century in England and in New Zealand; this will also be my focus here.

The traditional life drawing class as experienced at respectable art education institutions followed a set format and had strict rules regarding interaction and behaviour during class of both students and models. The rules for life classes at the Royal Academy of London state “The academician (known as the visitor) in charge of the life class set the pose, changed it if necessary and students drew lots for seats. Students were expected to work silently. Such regulations enforced a distance and formality between student and model” (Chesterman 2002 p. 18). This distance and formality of setting allowed drawing from life and the female nude to continue in art even through the “great frost of Victorian prudery” (Clark 1956 p. 150). Models were usually female and usually expected to remain silent during the class; artists were usually male and expected to do the same. There were limitations on any interaction between the model and students, to the point where one anecdote claims that when a model fainted in a similar session, the instructor had to rouse her by poking her with his walking stick (Chesterman 2002 p. 93). This style of life drawing class has become part of the “tradition” of high art education, and despite advances in artistic educational training, gender equality and social understandings of nude modelling, this is the format and atmosphere most expect from a life drawing session.

There are very few accounts of life drawing classes from the point of view of the model, for a variety of reasons. Particularly in the 19th century the stigma around nude modelling was equivalent to that of prostitution, to which it was compared; thus most models preferred to remain anonymous and would not register their names or record their experiences. This stigma also impacted on the availability and accessibility of nude models, both for individuals and institutions. Sandra Chesterman clearly relates the problem of finding a model for study, and the public perception of indecency of the art being created from the life sessions;

It is hardly surprising that female models were difficult to find: the stigma attached to a woman who was prepared to stand naked in front of artists was always far greater than that experienced by a man. Victorian discomfort with the nude, and suspicion of those who modelled, impeded artists' access to models within the art schools and discouraged those working from the life model outside the institutions. If the art were indecent then, in the public mind, so too must be the models, who were seen as being outside the normal codes of respectable behaviour even if their lives were blameless. To much of the population, a model, like a prostitute, offered her body for sale; little difference was seen between the two. (Chesterman 2002 p. 29)

Partially because of this on-going problem, life drawing classes with a nude model became less common and were often no longer required as part of the educational experience.

The demise of the life class in art schools was also related to the rising feminist consciousness of the 1970s and 1980s. Encoded with meaning by the patriarchal values of western society – to the extent that by the mid-nineteenth century a framed painting of a female nude, more than any other subject, exemplified fine art – it was inevitable that the depiction of the nude and its interpretation would be a focus for post-modern feminism. (Chesterman 2002 p. 96)

As Chesterman relates here, the stigma against the nude in life drawing and fine art became a subject for later artists, particularly feminist artists, to use and examine through their own work. The examination of the historical treatment of the nude and the presentation of the nude female for the male gaze is a significant feature of much contemporary feminist art, and transgressing ideas of the high-art nude in art and performance have allowed artists to comment forcefully on the treatment of women, the sexualization or repression of sexuality of the women, and particularly the loss of agency of the figure of the nude. These ideas have been represented through many different artistic forms, but that form most interesting here is the use of nudity by female performance artists.

[S]ome of the most exciting and radical women's art in recent years has drawn on the representation of the female body and has explored subjectivity in relation to a politics of the body. Many of these artists work with their own bodies rather than using models but there are also ways in which the ethical premises of the life class can be shifted and used to explore different and progressive sets of issues. (Nead 1992 p. 52)

These performance artists utilize the symbolism of their own bodies, often in terms of the nude, to explore various representations of the female body and the abstract concepts attached to the artistic nude. Feminist performance art of the 1970s and 1980s can be characterized as primarily focusing on giving agency and voice to women within the art world and moving them away from the role of silent object of representation (Nead 1992 p. 63). For many of these performance artists this did not involve overt sexualization but rather representing physically the abstract concepts of the ideal natural figure, such as has been related to the female nude throughout the Classical and Neoclassical periods. "These performance artists attempt to evade the power hierarchy that cultural feminists find explicit in representations of women by separating images of the female nude from sexual desire" (Dolan 1987 p. 160).

This is an important consideration for performance artists and was particularly important in the formative years of performance art; the presentation of a performance that could be clearly understood in traditional art terms while also pushing boundaries in other manners helped establish performance art as a legitimate artistic endeavor. More contemporary performance artists of the late 1980s, 1990s and 2000s have been able to build upon this and introduce sexuality and explicit behaviour as a respected and authentic artistic commentary, though in some cases there is still considerable debate regarding the qualification of the work as artistic or pornographic (Sprinkle & Cody 2001; www.anniesprinkle.org).

Art and Pornography

The discussion of the nude in art has always been related to the morals of the nude body in society. The other primary vessel for visually exposing the nude body, particularly the nude female body, is pornography. The line between the pornographic nude and the artistic nude is difficult to define and has changed over time to reflect the understandings of sexual and non-sexual representation in the wider social setting. Some definition of the high art nude has been given; here I wish to discuss the construction of the pornographic nude and give some discussion to the way photography and sketching can be seen as having specific allusions to pornography and life drawing, immoral and moral behaviour within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School. This leads to a discussion of the concept of the "Anti-Art School", and how it is related to the mainstream art education system.

Pornographic nudes are often constructed in opposition to the high art nude – they contain all of the socially and morally negative attributes high art nudes do not contain because of their status *as* "high-art nudes". The pornographic nude is sexually arousing, immoral, something to be ashamed of having or doing, and something for private display only. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, the pornographic nude is closely associated with the fine nude, with the constant possibility that if caution is not taken, one might well become the other (Nead 1992 p. 13). The pornographic nude is constructed as the direct "Other" to the high art nude, and though the balance between the two has moved as attitudes towards nudity and sexual conduct have changed over time, the concept of difference in result and reasoning between the two forms has remained similar; "[If] art is seen to represent the sublimation or transformation of sexual drives, then pornography conveys the sexual unmediated; it incites and moves the viewer to action" (Nead 1992 p. 28).

Pornography is defined as a work that is the explicit portrayal of sexual subject matter for the purposes of sexual arousal and erotic satisfaction (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). The pornographic nudes I refer to here can mostly be classified as “soft core” pornography, representing nudity and sexual suggestiveness rather than full sexual acts. This is because these images are closest to the high art nude in presentation and often draw upon the themes and settings commonly found in the high art nude while still being produced explicitly for the purposes of sexual arousal. Since the establishment of an organized pornography industry, this type of image has become more easily accessible to the general public, and as time progresses social understandings of respectable images and sexual content have progressed to the point where images that would have been strictly censored as recently as ten years ago are now publicly displayed through television, print or online media. Some refer to this as the “pornografication” of society (McNair 2010), with pornographic themes and references now shaping public behaviour and assisting with the overall sexualization of mainstream society. Along with this, high art itself has taken up pornography as a reference and source for inspiration, using pornography to comment on the contemporary sexualized lifestyle and to push the boundaries as to what is and should be considered “art”.

One separation between pornography and high art nudes is often located in the method of creation and display. The most common form that pornography takes is photographic visuals, while high art nudes, though they can be photographic, are most frequently expected to be created through sketches, painting or sculpture. High-art nude photographs are a more dangerous format than painting because it lacks the Classical connections and because the form itself lacks the measures that allowed high-art painted nudes to remove themselves from moral problems. These measures are most noticeable in the idealization of features, the modification of the body and face to fit an ideal form that mimics but does not completely replicate the physical form (Clark 1956 p. 4). Photography, however, continues to hold some

of the expectation that what is photographed is real; that is the figure in the photograph is a direct representation of the physical form in its fleshy, morally problematic entirety. Though we understand that photographs can be manipulated and often are, there is still an unease felt when faced with a photographed nude that this is a real person, with a life and some kind of sexual potential.

This separation is retained in the format of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School. Photography is done by authorized persons only, usually members of the organizational crew. Photography by the attendees is prohibited for several reasons, such as to make sure the event is seen as a professional one, to protect the models/performers, and so the event does not attract people who are simply there to leer at performers but invites those who have some investment in the life-drawing side of the event; "Many branches have their own official photographers and no branch wants their sessions to devolve into fifty creepy men shooting cellphone photos" (Dr Sketchy's FAQ). The organizers and format of Dr Sketchy's work together to keep pornography as merely a reference point; attendees are expected to understand cultural cues and references, but the event itself is never allowed to move into the realm of pornographic performance. The fact that it is still retained as a reference point, however, adds to the separation from the traditional life drawing class – confirming the status as the "Anti-Art School".

Anti-Art School

The creator of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, Molly Crabapple, is often asked about the title of "Anti-Art School" and what this means. Her answers often compare the expectations she had entering art school with the reality, and how she set about rejecting the reality and creating her own version of the "artist's lifestyle" she had desired.

When I was twenty-two, some friends and I founded Dr. Sketchy's Anti-Art School. I had just dropped out of college, and was eking out a living as an artists model. During those grey hours posing, I got the idea to combine my passions.

Posing for art class is a sterile affair. You stand silently. People sketch you. The room is bright and cold. It's about education rather than excitement. But I didn't find those things mutually exclusive. I wanted to take the learning and combine it with the glittering personas of New York's burlesque underworld (where I often shimmied as a dancer).

Together with some art school companions, we pleaded our case to a local bar. Within a month, burlesque clown Dottie Lux posed for a tiny crowd of artists, and what would become an international phenomenon was born. (Molly Crabapple 2008, Cut Out + Keep)

I would like to explore this concept within the framework of life drawing I have presented here.

The position of Dr Sketchy's as "Anti-Art School" has several possible interpretations. The traditional life drawing class has been explained in some depth, and the relationship between artists and models within that described. The separation of high art from the pornographic and sexualized has also been well established. It is these boundaries – between artist and model, art and erotica – that I believe the "Anti-Art School" sets out to break. In removing itself from the framework of art school and in fact placing itself in opposition, Dr Sketchy's transgresses the most central rules of the art school institution and offers a chance for an interactive relationship between the model and artist, presenting and encouraging interpretation in a sexualized fashion.

Traditionally the danger with a nude life model and the artist or artists present is that instead of being a situation about the pursuit of high art, it will actually be an excuse for sexual interactions between the subjects. Particularly in the group situation this problem is

controlled by the rules and institutional understandings separating the activity from the potential sexual problem. Despite all of the measures used to dissuade the relationship between a model and artist being sexual, knowledge and allusions to sexual relationships between artists and models are common within art history. The history of relationships between models and artists is seemingly forcefully ignored when the life drawing is located within an educational institute. Physical distance and technical anatomical or geometrical reference is used to isolate the model as a prop or figure, lacking humanity and therefore lacking sexual appeal. This attitude has changed in more recent times, with models often identified and the problematic history of life drawing discussed within the institution (Chesterman 2002 p. 124). Within Dr Sketchy's, however, this is taken a step further; models are presented as sexual beings with agency over their presentation and uses. They are explicitly sexual in performances and often in poses, referencing directly the sexuality that is supposed to be nullified by their position as model.

Distinct from the traditional separation of the model and sexual or erotic reference, the model at Dr Sketchy's is presented as primarily a sexual figure to be gazed upon and considered as a sexual being as well as an artistic prop. The reclamation of the erotic in the physical presentation of the life drawing model breaks one of the fundamental barriers between high art and soft pornography, and removes the framing of the life drawing class as morally pure and above such common understandings of the naked flesh. Dr Sketchy's models are presented as self-aware, actively sexual beings who will spend the evening presenting to the audience a version of their sexuality, couched within the theme of the event and the general restrictions of legal tenets of public indecency. Rather than the moral codes of society in general dictating the ability to present the sexual as performance, Dr Sketchy's, while denying the status of franchise, offers suggestions and guidelines for producing an event that fits with the brand of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School (Rules and Benefits for Opening a

Branch of Dr Sketchy's). This relates back to the understandings of the difference between the burlesque strip tease and other forms of nude performance; this also relates to the fine separation of pornography and "pin-up" or lowbrow art. One organizational member of Dr Sketchy's Christchurch relates this separation as "keep[ing] it off the pole" (Hells Belle, interview 9/9/11), that is, keeping the performance visually separate from the stripper's pole dance and therefore apart from the connotations related to that situation.

So the Anti-Art School is permitted, in its format, to present sexuality within contemporary limits of respectable entertainment and the context of the bar in which the event is held. Much like the forms that are combined within Dr Sketchy's, the Anti-Art School offers the tease of burlesque without the open sexuality of stripping, and the morally ambiguous artist's nude without the social stigma. It is the balance of these two forms and presentations – sexual but not sexual – that needs to be negotiated throughout the event. The sexuality of the burlesque does not disappear when the performer becomes model, but is presented in such a way and within such framing that the potential slippage into pornography is controlled and directed instead to a parody or subversion of the expected life drawing form.

In addition to this, "Anti-Art School" offers a freedom to relocate the experience of the art school to a setting far removed from the educational institution, the bar, and to encourage those who would feel intimidated or out of place at the traditional art institution to attend. There is an understanding expressed by both organizers and attendees that Dr Sketchy's is not reliant on artistic talent or experience in its members, and that it is an inclusive opportunity for some who may otherwise never experience public drawing such as this. MC Hells Belle commented;

I don't know of any other life drawing classes that are really just about having fun with it, and not people who are like "oh I have to have talent" or "i have to be doing fine arts" or something. (Hells Belle, Interview, 9/9/11)

This expectation of traditional life drawing classes requiring some talent or education in the fine arts is consistent among both attendees with and those without formal artistic training. When asked what particularly appealed about Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, Audrey relates;

I really liked the egalitarian nature of it, where it's not just artists, it's people who are drawing on napkins with biros and just stick figures. (Audrey, Interview 17/5/2011)

This is in comparison to her discussion of her art school background, where life drawing was seen as “serious”, “really quiet and not very fun” (Audrey, Interview 17/5/2011). This direct comparison of the art school experience and the Anti-Art School experience highlights the freedom found in Dr Sketchy's by both those with artistic training, and those to whom this is a new experience.

Trainwreck [Audrey] says the Anti-Art of the title is about having a go, rather than producing art: "It's more about having fun and having a sketch. It's not about high art or low art, it's not about making stunning masterpieces, it's about engaging everyone. (The Press, 20/8/2010)

Within this description it can be stated that the Anti-Art School can be perceived as a liminal space. As “not an art school” but still “somewhere where art takes place” the Anti-Art School is between the understood realm of the art institution and the space outside of the institution, where art creation is not expected to take place, and certainly not expected to be a defining feature of events.

Liminality can be defined as the marginal or “in between” state between two fixed points or statuses; for example an initiate moving from boy to man within a ritual would be classed as “liminal” during the rite of passage, as he is no longer a boy but not yet a man (Turner 1967). Victor Turner applies this term predominantly to ritual, but there are other liminal spaces identifiable outside of the ritual state, and these Turner would identify as “liminoid” or

having the characteristics of the liminal, but being outside of the ritual process. Often this distinction is unnecessary and the term liminal is preferred, which is the term I have used within this thesis. When I discuss the Anti-Art School as being a liminal space, I am identifying it as being between the state of “art school” and “not art school”. This is because as an Anti-Art School it has many of the features of the art school, but is outside of the official institution and can be seen in part as a reaction against that institution. The Anti-Art School is not an art school, but it still contains the active art creation otherwise found only within such an institution, and it offers that experience to those outside of the group “art students”.

Active Art Creation

In comparison with the previous chapter, I will be looking at the audience of Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School in terms of their active role, that of art creators, and discuss the role of the performer as passive model below. The shift of focus from the performance to the posing also creates a shift of power roles, with the active artists of the audience now holding power over the situation as the traditional format of the life drawing class would structure it. The disparities in this comparison, between Dr Sketchy’s and the traditional format of life drawing, will continue to be addressed here.

The format of Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School privileges the position of the attendee as artist through consideration of the structure of the event; the majority of the time during the 2.5-3 hour event is spent with the attendee performing the role and actions of art creator, while only a small portion of the event time-wise is spent focusing on the model as burlesque performer. Because of this structure, it is uncommon for people to attend but not participate in the art creation. Though people may not participate fully in every single pose or competition

throughout the evening, it is rare and undesirable for people to attend without participating as art creators at all. Those people who may attend without the intention of participating are effectively pressured by both organizers and other attendees into joining in, as people donate materials to them or exert peer pressure through vocal admonitions to participate or through example, expressing how much fun they find the art creation. A large part of this peer interaction, particularly with new attendees, is assuring them that artistic talent or skill is not the measure of participation and admissions of their own lack of talent/skill/training. The camaraderie and interaction of attendees who may or may not have met previously is a significant feature of the event and is closely tied to the understandings of their position as art creators of equal merit.

People who attend Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School are often referred to by the creator of the format, Molly Crabapple, and the organizers of the various branches, as "Art Monkeys". This collective representation of the attendees as Art Monkeys offers several points for study. The reference to participants as "art monkeys" is stated by Molly Crabapple to be in reference to a long night spent by her and friends erecting large steel weasels for New York's Madagascar Institute (Dr Sketchy's FAQ). Outside of this limited origin, we can see the reference to the attendees as "art monkeys" allowing both a collective expression and identification, and encouraging inclusion of all involved, whether they identify as an "artist" in the traditional sense or not. An "art monkey" is one who participates in the events at Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, no matter their technical skill or where in the world they may be.

The communal grouping of participants under this title can also be understood in anthropological terms as part of the *communitas* participants are encouraged to experience while in the liminal space of the Anti-Art School.

The performance of the audience at Dr Sketchy's, either as spectators or art-creators, can be understood as exhibiting a sense of *communitas* as described by Victor Turner. Turner's idea of *communitas*, that is, the feeling of transcendent connectedness felt by participants, joining them in group experience (Turner 1982 pp.45-46), is related to liminality and the separation of participants from their ordinary roles, allowing them to ignore borders that otherwise would hinder the communal feeling, and experience *communitas* as part of the "anti-structure" of the ritual or performance. Anti-structure is how Turner describes the setting of performance, as it is outside the structure of everyday life, but still holds within itself an understanding of the borders of social groups or expectations; these normative constraints are acknowledged but loosened in order to allow the participants creativity and some escape from the everyday problems of inhabiting their ordinary social roles. (Turner 1982 p.44). The audience at a performance or ritual feels united by their position and intentions, in their ability to read cues and conventions of the event, and are for the most part treated as equals. Key symbols of *communitas* can be identified as the removal of individual identifiers such as dress and names, and the assumption instead of a collective name or title. I suggest here that the use of the term "art monkeys" is an example of this, and the encouragement of costume in a theme – therefore ensuring many people are dressed similarly or identifiably as a group – could also be seen as a signifier of communal identification.

This *communitas* is expressed through several visible forms of interaction throughout the event, including the peer pressure mentioned above. Within the peer pressure is an erasure of rank as much as is practicable; everyone is considered a potentially authentic artist, and the merit of the art produced is not the measure of this authenticity. The participation is the only measure of whether someone is considered an authentic artist within the confines of the event. Though peoples outside experiences of artistic training do influence the quality of the art they produce, there is very little differentiation between their experience of the event and

the experience of those with little to no outside training. Those regular attendees who are acknowledged to be skilled artists are not treated any differently than those who are not, except in the process of prize giving, where there is an attempt towards egalitarianism in the choices each month so that everyone has the opportunity to win regardless of their status in terms of skill. In order to do this there are individuals whom the organizers will not continue to give prizes to despite their skill; though they are equally as likely to discontinue giving prizes to people they also know personally, or who may have won prizes in recent months.

Other expressions of *communitas* within the event manifest in the vocally participatory nature of the audience during performances, hooting and applauding, the cheering on of organizers and models alike, and most interestingly, in spontaneous singing. This singing is not organized or designed by either attendees or Sketchy's crew members, but occurs spontaneously throughout the evening when appropriate songs inspire participants to sing along while they sketch the stationary model. These songs have no consistent theme across different months, and can be from different genres and different time periods – the only requirement seems to be a collective familiarity with the song and an atmosphere with a high feeling of *communitas* amongst both regular and occasional attendees. Each month's background music is compiled by Hells Belle according to the theme of the month, for instance, music of the punk genre for the Punk themed event, or music referencing beaches and summer for the Beach themed event. Usually this is a mix of styles and is well received by the attendees. The use of background music can also be contrasted with the traditional experience of the life drawing class, as they are often described as silent and restrained, where Dr Sketchy's encourages irreverence and participation.

A direct comparison between the audience as active art creators and as passive spectators, as discussed in the previous chapter, is useful at this point. The audience as spectators can be expected to have a fairly similar experience; each will be presented the same performance,

which they then may interpret through their own knowledge and experiences. The design of the performance may give specific cues to what frames the performance should be viewed through, and by this framing offer as much of a consistent presentation to the individuals in the audience as possible. It is the performer's competence and their ability to correctly target their audience that dictates whether the performance is well received and enjoyed by the audience – the performer holds the power over the experiences of the audience. When the audience shifts from spectators to art creators, however, a different format and system of interactions between the attendees and the performer takes precedence.

When the audience becomes the art creator, they take control of their individual experiences of the event rather than relying on the competence of the performer for a positive experience; the artists now require their own active individual experiences to be pleasurable and entertaining. The role of the model will be discussed more below, but this shift of power to the art creators is an important one in Dr Sketchy's. When discussing the structure of power relations "[t]he juxtaposition of the naked model and the clothed artist is a usefully blatant visualization of the power relations that are traditionally embodied in the life class" (Nead 1992 p. 50). Though the artists are clothed, they do not have the same authority within Dr Sketchy's that they would have within this traditional format. Whether spectating or creating art they are "Art Monkeys"; whether attending to the performance or engaging in art creation the attendees are still the paying audience, expected to enjoy whatever experience has been shaped for them, whether it be the performance or the poses and costumes of the stationery model. The difference is that their enjoyment of the art creation side of the event relies on their own level of participation and acceptance of the life drawing format, with very little reliance on the stationery model for entertainment.

Passive Modelling

The performer, when performing, captures the full attention of the audience and is the focus of activity. When modelling however, the performer becomes passive in role, acting as a “prop” for the creation of art by the attendees. Some of the traditional role of the artist’s model has been discussed, but requires more detail and direct comparison to the situation at Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School in order to highlight the differences between both the traditional and Anti-art School settings, and between the performances as model and burlesque performer. This section will also address the tableau vivant, which is somewhat contemporary with the Golden Age of burlesque, and draw some comparisons between the style of life modelling present at Dr Sketchy’s and the format and intentions of the tableau vivant.

The model within a traditional life drawing setting will enter the arranged staging area either already naked, or lightly robed. Students would be arranged around the raised stage so that each of them has a clear view of the model, and poses and timing would be directed by the person convening the class. The model is expected to comply with requests from the convener or students within reason, and the setting is usually a private closed room, in order to deter onlookers who have not entered into the contract of non-sexual viewing the life drawing setting requires. The common understanding of the traditional life drawing setting is silent, stuffy and restrictive. In more informal life drawing groups the model may be known to the artists and engage in light conversation with them while they sketch, or there may be quiet music on in the background; rarely though is there significant interaction between the artists and model while posing (Chesterman 2002 p. 114). Comparing this with the role of the model within Dr Sketchy’s there are significant points of difference, particularly relating to the relationship between the model and artists, and who holds power over the session.

At Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School the framing is familiar – there are those in the role of artist, those in the role of convener and those who model. The way that these roles are performed and the influences brought upon them by the dual roles the format offers – performer/model, audience/artist – are what make the Anti-Art School distinct from the traditional life drawing session. When asked about the inspiration for setting up Dr Sketchy's, the creator Molly Crabapple recalls her time in art school and working as a life drawing model herself;

You were supposed to do it silently and just demonstrate tendons... You weren't supposed to have an opinion. I wanted to do a session that would celebrate the model. (Molly Crabapple, New York Times October 4 2009)

This “celebration of the model” is evident in the focus on the model as the “muse” rather than a prop or scene. The model is presented as inspiration to be celebrated and in some senses “worshipped” by the attending artists at the Anti-Art School; they are invited to sketch her form because she allows them to. The understanding is the model does not have to do anything the attending artists want or say, but rather they should be grateful for the opportunity, however fleeting, to capture the likeness of the model through drawing. The model designs her own poses and works with the organizational crew to ensure the set is suitable and they are all joined in a cohesive vision of the night. The organizational team's job throughout the night is to keep people engaged and focused on the model, often calling for the audience to attend to the model with cheers or applause, catcalls and laughter. The boundaries between the model and audience are much looser than within the traditional life drawing framework, and there is little active policing by the organizers to keep them apart, but plenty of encouragement to transgress the barrier up to a point. There is still little to no physical contact between the audience and model, though dependent on the model and what they are comfortable with, there may be considerable conversation and interaction between the stage and the seated artists surrounding it.

The most prominent distinction between the position of the model at the traditional life drawing class and the position of the model in Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School can be seen in the posing of the model and the types of poses presented. Life drawing, as with much of art education, takes its designs from Greek and Roman sculpture and ideas around physiognomy and the artistic nude. Many poses within traditionally-formatted life drawing classes will replicate or reference this artistic history through imitation. Commonly models will adhere to the Classical ideas regarding the passive form of the female, or the positioning of weight and use of limited props such as spears. Contemporary life drawing classes have limited use of some of these influences, such as posing the female in more active "male" poses, but the referential ideas of the Classical period are still foremost in the artistic history of the life drawing class. Within Dr Sketchy's it is true this is still an influence, but it exists as one of many, and is under-represented compared to references to other "low" or "alternative" forms of art.

The use of pinup poses is particularly common, as the model replicates poses made common in the 1950's and popularized since then as sexualized but innocent "cheesecake" imagery and its sister, the harder darker fetish imagery and straight pornography. The image below is indicative of the reclining pose familiar to fashion spreads and other forms of modelling. In this instance, the setting and costuming are referential to that darker fetish imagery, as the model is performing to the theme of Dias De Los Muertos or the Mexican Day of the Dead; the poses are similar to those found in "cheesecake" pinup imagery, but due to these visual references it is experienced as more closely familiar with fetish imagery or theatrical imagery of a villainous or "vampish" character.



Figure 2: Ruby Ruin, Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School Christchurch.

This style of posing is designed to elicit a sensual response if not a sexual one. The pinup is “acceptable”, semi-clothed soft pornography by design – it reminds the viewer of the possibility of sexually charged conduct and sexual situations. Pinup posing particularly focuses the eyes on the legs, rear and breasts, all presented clearly and with the trademark cheesecake smile. In Figure 3 the model is engaged in a standing pose with a basic prop, offering a three-quarter profile view of the body and allowing the light present to highlight areas such as the breasts and rear. Previously within this particular session of Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School the model has presented two performances involving a striptease and through this has presented a “cheeky” type character, gently teasing the audience throughout. It is within this context that I read this pose as more similar to the cheesecake pinup than to the standard life drawing model. With this character present in the performances it is evident that the presentation of angle and light is designed to continue the “cheeky” cheesecake offering of the model. Without this context such a pose could be read as a basic life

modelling exercise, but within the range of performances and poses offered throughout the night this is clearly situated to the audience as a reference to the pinup genre.

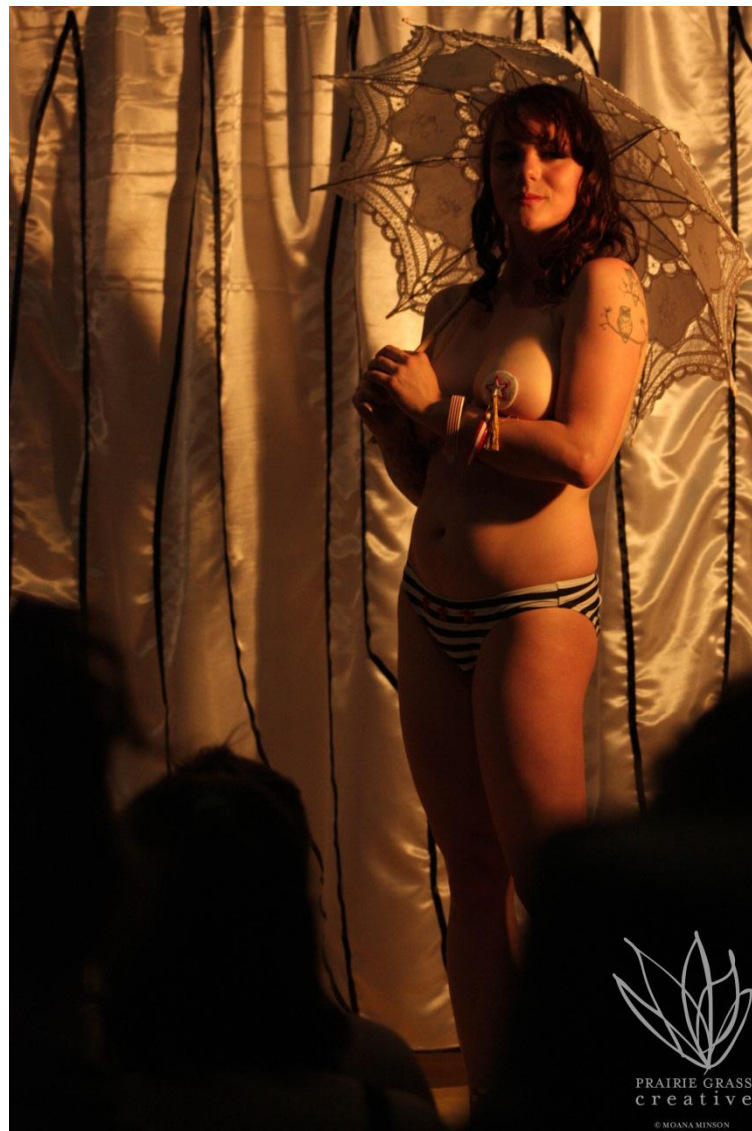


Figure 3: Gracie Hart, Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School Christchurch

This posing is much more sexual in nature than the style commonly experienced in the traditional life drawing class, but can be viewed as more positive for the model. This seems an oxymoronic statement, but the whole design of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School is to celebrate the model and allow him or her the freedom to present themselves in the way they best prefer. The model has full agency over the poses they take, only limited by the available props and set – which they have had prior communication about – and their costume, which

again is an item of their choice. The model is rarely directed at Dr Sketchy's, though they may show ideas to the organizational team beforehand for approval of appropriateness and their experienced input. Within the normal life drawing setting, it is usually the artist or convener in a group situation who have the authority over the model's pose, length of time they will pose and often those participating have the right to photograph the model for later completion of their sketches. Dr Sketchy's do not allow photography for various reasons, but we can see that with the lack of it, participants are being asked to capture what they can of their "muse" within the short time periods allocated for each pose, increasing the adrenaline of the room with short poses and increasing the desire to capture effectively and quickly the form before them.

There is one other form of performance art that can be directly compared to Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, that of the tableau vivant. The tableau vivant or "living picture" is sometimes cast as the precursor to burlesque in the presentation of the nude or nearly nude on stage, and the movement of this representation away from the upper classes to a middle-class audience.

Throughout the 1830s New York theatres and museums offered 'personifications' of famous paintings and statues 'performed' by individuals or companies as entr'acte entertainments or as a part of dramatic vehicles. Living pictures fed the nineteenth-century fascination with verisimilitude by presenting human figures arranged to imitate paintings or statues surrounded by appropriate scenery and props. In a typical living picture exhibition, the stage curtain would part to reveal models frozen in position to the accompaniment of music or spoken commentary. After a few minutes, the curtain would close, allowing the stage and models to be rearranged for the next picture. By the late 1840s, some enterprising showmen had realized the interest in their exhibitions might be increased through the representation of paintings and statues of nude or partially revealed subjects. (Allen 1991 p. 92)

The tableau vivant personified the art that was previously made from the life model; the movement of the nude figure from the process of making art to the presentation of that art in imitation pushed the nude model into the open view of theatre-goers, rather than exclusively being the view of the artist. We can see some of the tradition of the “living picture” in the staging of Dr Sketchy’s as the models often replicate common poses from high art, but do so in a setting that is simultaneously the theatre and the artist’s studio. The tableau vivant was most popular shortly before the spread of burlesque performance and we can see it as acting an intermediary step between art and performance, the life model and the performer, the clothed and the nude; the tableau is not dressed but does not undress, it presents the liminal state with physical bodies that had previously only been captured in art and sculpture. The stillness of the tableau kept it from slipping into pornography and immoral performance, but it kept a fine balance that threatened to make the artistic nude all too physical. With this framing we can see the stationery modelling at Dr Sketchy’s as related to the tableau vivant just as much as it is related to the life drawing class, though a general public unfamiliarity with the performance form of the tableau vivant means it is not an influence explicitly presented. Dr Sketchy’s uses the tableau vivant or “living picture” as a bridge between the forms of the burlesque performance and the life drawing model, a way to present the life model in such a way so to reference high art while engaging with the low presented within the pinup and the burlesque performance.

Though this is the same group of people, the experiences during each segment of the event, between the life drawing and the burlesque, are very different. Likewise, though the two formats blended in the event are very different, the attendees are able to experience the night as a whole as a cohesive event. This is a difficult balance allowing the two different forms of performance to coexist in a way that allows the experience of a cohesive whole, without compromising the ways in which the participants react to each form individually. This

balance creates the dichotomy of the active/passive performer/audience which has been the focus of my discussion thus far.

This chapter has addressed the history of the life drawing class and some detail of the use of the nude model in art. As well as this I have discussed the problem of the boundary between art and pornography, which has followed the use of the nude figure in life drawing and art since it became part of the artist's practice. The concept of the "Anti-Art School" is central to the positioning of Dr Sketchy's against this history, as it is both situated within and a reaction against the institution of the art school and the way that the institution has separated art creation from society. Finally in this chapter, I have addressed the form of the "active audience" and the "passive model". Though this dichotomy is somewhat invented for the purposes of comparison, I feel that the understanding of their roles and performances held by the participants of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School lends itself to such a separation and comparative examination. The next chapter of this thesis brings together the two previous chapters regarding the formats of life drawing and burlesque performance and addresses what I have isolated as the most problematic point in regards to creating and maintaining the balance between them: the difference between the "naked" and the "nude", and how these differences are regulated within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School.

CHAPTER FOUR: NAKED VS NUDE

A division that has been mentioned several times in this thesis is that between the “naked” and the “nude”. These are conceptions of the physically naked body within the disciplines of art and performance that separate the artistic/performing “nude” from the merely “naked” unclothed physical body. This chapter will focus on a detailed examination of the distinction between the naked and the nude, and how this division is relevant to Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School. This will build on the understandings of the nude in life drawing and the nude in performance that have already been explored and will give a comparative examination of the differences in theorizing the artistic nude and burlesque naked, and how the two conceptions are compromised and reworked within the format of Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School.

Within both performance and art there is an acceptance of the concept that the naked form can be “more” than naked or at least different kinds of naked. Artistic nudity must be separated from the “vulgar” nakedness, the unclothed human form having the potential to represent either. “Vulgar” nakedness reminds the viewer of the baser desires of the human flesh, of uncontained sexuality and carnal desire, of the grotesque and aesthetically “vulgar”. Contained, moderated nudity in the form of the artistic nude is presented as free from these immoral connotations and connected rather to abstract concepts of ‘the natural’ and idealized beauty. The most commonly referenced theorist of this separation is Kenneth Clark’s volume *The Nude: The Study of Ideal Art*.

The English language, with its elaborate generosity, distinguishes between the naked and the nude. To be naked is to be deprived of our clothes and the word implies some of the embarrassment which most of us feel in that condition. The word nude, on the other hand, carries, in educated usage, no uncomfortable overtone. The vague image it projects into the mind is not of a huddled and

defenceless body, but of a balanced, prosperous and confident body: the body reformed. (Clark 1956 p. 1)

The nude of Clark's conception is "clothed in art", separated from the naked by the cultural construction of "Art". Clark's construction of the artistic Nude has been dissected and disputed by contemporary theorists such as Lynda Nead, but the conception of this separation between the types of nude/naked has continued and is still applicable when discussing life drawing and the construction of the nude in performance.

I will be utilizing both Clark's definitions and Nead's critique in my study of the nude in performance and life drawing, and attempting to identify the ways the line between "naked" and "nude" blurs within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School.

The Nude in Performance

The naked (or, at least, semi-naked) female body is the focus of attention at any session of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School. Regardless of theme or performer, the event itself is billed as a chance not only to see the performance of a burlesque striptease, but to actively capture through sketching the form of the model in a variety of poses and states of undress. Neither of these situations is in itself unusual; patrons attend burlesque performances worldwide, and artists attend life-drawing classes around the globe; both are part of separate traditions – theatre and art education – but both contain a focus on the female form. What is unusual is the combination of the two forms, and the two traditions. Within each of these traditions there is a different understanding of the moral, artistic and psychological meaning of the naked female form, understandings that seem to be contradictory and mutually exclusive when compared. In this section I will explore the differing understandings of nakedness and nudity

within burlesque and art, and relate them to the form and function of the female body in Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School.

Nudity within performance art may particularly aim to confront, shock or present difficult scenarios to audiences. With performances such as Julie Atlas Muz stripping herself from rope bondage to the tune of "You Don't Own Me" to address abuse and control over women (Willson 2008 p. 131), feminist performances artists have often embraced nudity in performance for its arresting visual impact, or to enhance a message they may link to the symbol of the nude female form. This can be extended to the presentation of the female form in feminist still art such as sculpture or painting; the form may be treated in ways that cause similar discomfort in many viewers, or that are designed to elicit certain responses or discussions on certain practices, including the use of the nude figure in art (McDonald 2001 p. 38). Often the messages relayed within such presentations are political in nature, and relate to significant social issues such as gender equality and acknowledgment of the female experience.

The nude in burlesque and within Dr Sketchy's does address and present certain messages and concepts, both personal and political. Nudity evokes feelings within an audience dependant on the framing of the nudity within the performance.

The very real presence of the actor accounts, Schechner suggests, for the theatre audience's general resistance to on-stage nudity. He writes that the 'hierarchy of tolerance seems related to both the degree and the kind of involvement expected of the reader and the viewer' (1969 p. 139). Reading is the most private of pleasures. In the cinema, the product for consumption remains at a distance, but the spectator has an awareness of the rest of the audience. In the theatre, because of the actor/character presence, '[l]ittle overt sexuality is permitted onstage because the audience knows that what happens to the character also happens to the actor' (Schechner 1969 p. 141). Certainly much contemporary theatre

exploits the proxemics relations between spectator and actor. Not all audiences can accept the frame-breaking this involves. (Bennett 1997 pp. 152-153)

The presentation and reception of nudity in theatre as described here can be contrasted with the reception of nudity in burlesque; as the frame of a burlesque performance gives the expectation that there will be certain levels of nudity presented, most audience members will not feel uncomfortable at the presentation. The frame insists that those presenting are doing so of their own free will, and are in fact relishing their presentation, any hesitation in the performance being played as a knowing mockery or the hesitation a woman is “supposed” to feel at exposing herself before an audience. Were burlesque performances to present an obviously hesitant and uncomfortable performer without this “wink-and-a-nudge” satirical framework evident to the audience, it could reasonably be expected that the audience would share and amplify the discomfort of the performer and would not be able to enjoy the burlesque in the usual manner.

Nudity within burlesque performance is an interesting thing to describe. Though performers rarely strip to full nudity, the focus of burlesque is the revealing of skin and the gradual movement towards near-nudity. Historically burlesque can be seen as the predecessor to full-nude strip clubs and peep shows, bringing the performance of nudity to the public stage and social awareness. With the rise of strip clubs burlesque became less about the titillation of revealing socially unacceptable amounts of flesh, and in its resurgence has been focused on the artefacts of the nostalgic burlesque “nude” and the performance of associated skills; the focus on dance, contortion, tassel twirling and other performance activities, and on the visual markers of the burlesque – the nipple pasties, the corsets, the garter belts and stockings. The focus of this resurgence in neo-burlesque separates burlesque visually and artistically from the stripper and strip club by clothing the nude in sign equipment – these visual markers – and performance styles more “artistic” and “performative” than their stripping cousins.

Laws against performing nude on stage in any American venues that also serve alcohol saw the adoption of nipple covers known as “pasties” because they are pasted on with glue or tape, and the creation of the g-string, allowing performers to show as much as possible while staying within the law. Regulations stated the nipple pasties had to be visible from the back of the theatre, which meant performers took to using sequins and bright coloured fabrics, and inspired the creation of the nipple tassel, possibly burlesque’s most well-known signifier (Weldon 2010 pp. 57-59). Fashion of the day incorporated stockings and garter belts, as well as corsets for a number of years. Though these items came in and out of fashion, their history of use in art as a prelude or reference to the nude figure, particularly in the trend for images of women undressing or in “déshabillé” means that they acquired connotations of both fine art and sexual activity;

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, censorship laws generally forbade the representation of naked women, except in high art. However, the corset assumed the role of surrogate for the body; it also functioned as a sign of undressing and making love. (Steele 2001 p. 45)

Corsets particularly were conceived as being a sort of “clothed nakedness” (Steele 2001 p. 115) as they held and shaped the female figure, acting as a “second skin” or external ribcage for the female torso.

The corset is a key symbol within neo-burlesque. Though certainly not required for all burlesque routines, it is a commonly recognized symbol of the genre when used for media and publicity of an event, particularly where showing further nudity would be restricted.

Being both clothed and unclothed, the corseted woman was placed ambiguously between two contradictory esthetic realms: that of classical sculpture and that of the fashion-plate. (Kunzle 1972 pp. 108-109)

The history of the corset as a sexual representative or analog for the nude female body is well documented through the use of the corset in fine art. It is this representation that is carried through into burlesque performance, as well as other uses in advertising media and general cultural constructions of female sexuality.

Concealed from sight, like the body that it touches, underwear implicitly alludes to the act of undressing, a transition often perceived as a prelude to sexual intimacy. By delaying the sight of the naked body, layers of clothing and underclothing function as a kind of striptease, arousing sexual curiosity by holding in promise the thrill of exposure. Moreover, the sexual charm of the naked body seems to ‘rub off’ on underwear, which then adds an excitement all its own. (Steele 2001 p. 115)

Underwear and lingerie suggest the closeness of nudity and sexual contact, corsets all the more so; they are no longer common pieces of everyday wear for women but are donned only for special occasion outfits, such as under a wedding dress. Much more common now is the corset as outerwear, popularized by Vivienne Westwood in the 1970s, when the corset was worn in rebellion by many women – and men – within the Punk movement. Commonly corsets are worn as formal, costume or fetishwear in contemporary circumstances.

The corset as costume in burlesque is the strongest representation; though the corset as fetishwear is related to this, it is outside of the realm of study here. Though Dr Sketchy’s often pushes the boundaries of neo-burlesque through the adoption of certain themes and costume styles, the corset is still immediately recognizable as referencing the burlesque content of the event, and is often present in the costumed audience and organizers if not part of the performer’s costume.

‘The satin corset may be the nude of our era’, suggested Edouard Manet, whose famous painting *Nana* depicts the actress Henrietta Hauser wearing a pale blue satin corset. (Steele 2001 p. 113)

Though this comment references the late 1900s, it holds true today. Though there is considerably more nudity allowed within advertising and publicly accessible media, in considering advertising of burlesque though the performance itself may present far more nudity, the image of the corseted performer is much more common. The above quote, however, is referencing the use of the corset in fine art; though I am discussing the performers, these points hold equally true for the position of the corset in art today. A corseted figure can be expected to be received as a much more sexual figure than a fine art nude, because of the history of the corset and the way the corset is in use today.



Figure 4: Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, courtesy www.drsketchy.com

The above image is an example of not only the use of corsets in costume for Dr Sketchy's, but shows the other costume signifiers of burlesque; the opera glove, garter belt and stockings. These items are not exclusively related to burlesque, though in combination there is little doubt as to the reference. The key sign equipment of burlesque and the point of separation between the nude and the sexualized, explicit naked is surprisingly that which conceals the truly naked – the nipple pastie. Figure 5 gives one example from Dr Sketchy's Christchurch of how the small coverings can be used as referential to both the form of burlesque, and in this particular case, the theme of the event, "Nerdy".

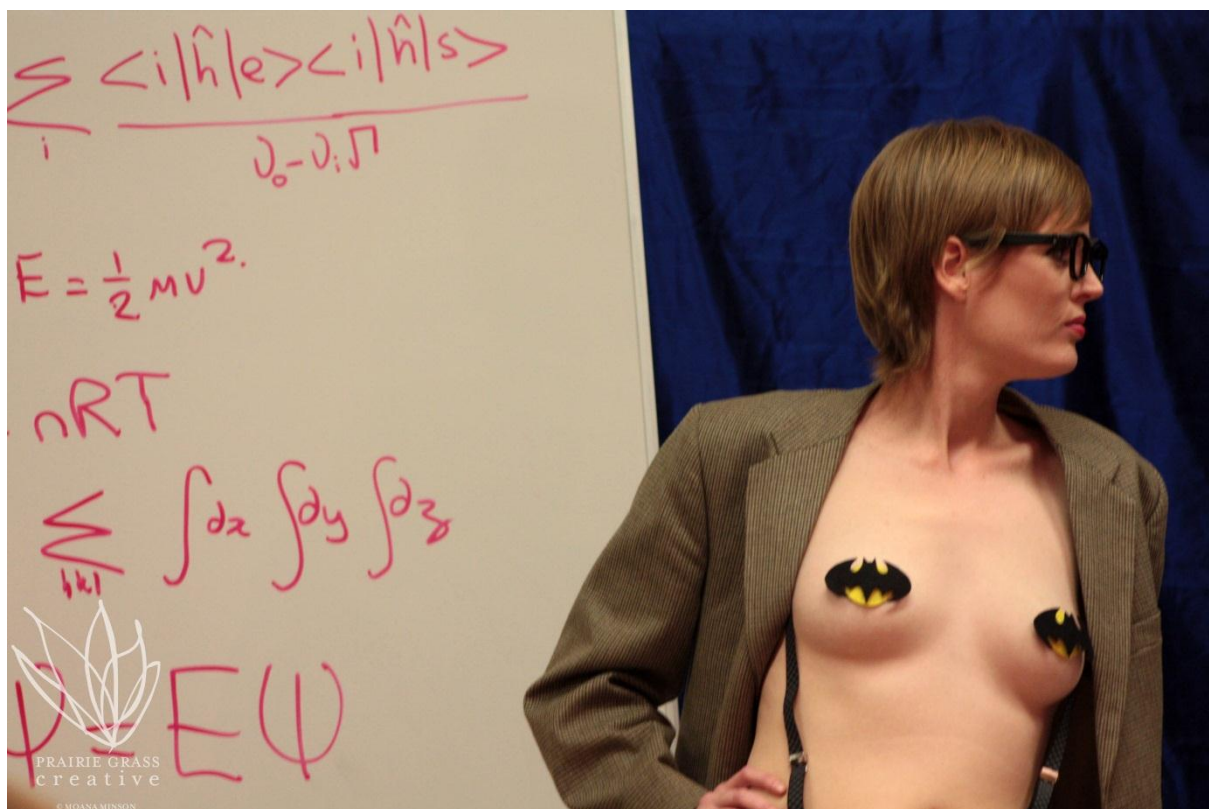


Figure 5: Princess, Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School Christchurch

Nipple pasties are an extraordinary piece of costuming, exclusive to burlesque as signified by the fact that when used in any situation outside of burlesque performance it stands as a reference *to* burlesque. Some mention of this has been made in the methodology chapter; here

I will discuss in more detail the role of the nipple pastie in burlesque, how this relates to art and the nude/naked dichotomy within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School.

The role of the nipple pastie in neo-burlesque is multifaceted. As well as allowing burlesque performances to be held in venues where nudity is otherwise banned, they act as a significant part of the costuming and as what Goffman has described as "sign equipment" (Goffman 1959 p.50). To expand on the description of sign equipment laid out in the methodology chapter, I will discuss the role of the pastie not only in burlesque more generally but within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School. At Dr Sketchy's there is a tension and balance between the burlesque and the life drawing formats both present within the event. Nipple pasties belong firmly to the burlesque performance, as a signifier of the burlesque scene and the understandings of nudity allied with this. When the performer moves to the role of model, however, the pasties stay on and become foreign within the life drawing class. They are an ever-present reminder of the sexualization of the model/performer and the "low" attribute given to burlesque in comparison with life drawing and fine art. The nude in life drawing is exhibited naked, even "curated" such as a museum exhibit may be – one is to look but not touch, and the nude enters and exits in the same or similar form. The model does not enter and then undress, but enters in the state they are to remain in. With burlesque it is all about the tease and the reveal, coming out fully dressed or extravagantly costumed and then removing it in an intimate or theatrical manner. The fact that the nipple pasties on the performer at Dr Sketchy's stay on while modelling for the artists is a constant reminder of the striptease and the fact this is still a *potentially naked* person rather than an unchanging nude.

As well as reading nipple pasties as concealing and containing the "potential" naked figure, moving the naked figure closer to the art nude through containment but keeping it distinct by reference to that potentially transgressive nakedness, we can also see the use of pasties as keeping the burlesque nude apart from the figure of the stripper. This liminal position of the

burlesque nude between the “pure” art nude and the “sinful” stripper is carefully moderated and balanced so that it never slips into the realm of the stripper, though it can never reach the heights of the fine art nude’s purity and moral containment. The nakedness of the stripper can be framed as presenting an imitation of sexual acts and the suggestion of potential for the audience member to engage in those sexual acts with the performer. Within burlesque, however, there is little to no suggestion that the audience member might be able to view the performer as sexually available and the performance itself contains less imitation of sexual acts and more presentation of the *prelude* to sexual acts in the striptease – which by never reaching full nudity leaves the audience member “unfinished” as well. The nudity of the burlesque performer is the performer’s to reveal as she wishes; the stripper is obligated to reveal themselves and enact certain sexual imitations, such as the lap dance. Such a performance would be rare within burlesque, which controls the separation between audience and performer and does not encourage the one-on-one contact that strip clubs offer for purchase (see Frank 2002 for more discussion on relationships within strip clubs).



Figure 6: Ruby Ruin, Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School Christchurch

With all of this background to the corset and pasties, we can frame their use within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School as confirming and adding to the liminal character of the event. These items reference the neo-burlesque performance and confirm the active performance within Dr Sketchy's as being of that genre, keeping it apart from the genre of stripping and the "immoral" nakedness of the strip club. They also act to transgress the non-sexualized "pure" nudity of the life model, bringing the referents of the sexually titillating and nostalgic neo-burlesque rather than the clean and contained Classical statuary props traditionally associated with the life model. The performer and model at Dr Sketchy's then blends the two roles in a way that embraces the tenets of both, but is separate from the commonly experienced form of either. This liminoid space between burlesque and life drawing allows the model the empowerment of the burlesque performer, and gives the performer the artistic integrity of the life model. The history of nudity within art and life drawing is where I now turn focus, so that I can explore the artistic side of the dichotomy Dr Sketchy's has positioned itself between.

The Nude in Art

Nudity in high art is a distinctive feature of both Classical and modern Western art. The nude female form in particular has been the focus of artists since the Classical period, and art education has included drawing from life as a central part of instruction since the Victorian period. The history of the female nude in art requires some explanation, as though it seems natural and expected now, there were significant changes in the understanding of form and moralistic idealism which led to the nude female form becoming so central to art history.

Defined as a naked or unclothed person or body, or a representation of the naked body, the nude carries a range of cultural meanings. (Steele 2001 p. 113)

This range of meanings is complicated by and also connected to the meanings discussed above in connection to the nude figure in performance.

Though some history of the life drawing class has been given, I wish to explore in more detail how the nude has been treated in art and in the life drawing session so as to offer a detailed comparison between the life drawing and burlesque formats, and fully locate Dr Sketchy's between the two forms. The nude acts within art as a representation of a variety of abstract concepts, depending predominantly on the time period in which the art was created and the nature of the artist. Often the nude in Neo-Classical art represents the concept of the natural, ideal and untouched; the use of biblical or classical mythology as a framing narrative for the nude continues to distance the figure in the painting not only from the viewer, but from the model/s that would have posed for the artist's reference (Clark 1956 pp. 22-23; p. 99). This distance between the physical form and the nude in the painting or sculpture was part of how the nude in art was kept separate from the physical flesh and the potential for sexualization. The physical nude always held the potential for sexual accessibility, but when "clothed in art" – idealized in the painted form and de-individualized so that no individual physical model could be identified or said to be accurately represented – the nude could be discussed in terms of artistic integrity and impersonal measurements rather than in terms of physical, potentially available persons (Clark 1956 p. 153).

Nakedness is the most visual sign that a body is available for sexual encounter with another body. Since art stands between the artist and the spectator, it might be argued that art that represents the naked body serves the artist both as a sexual lure and as a shield against intimacy. This might explain why the female nude has given rise to an astonishing variety of ambiguities related to the construction of gender and identity. In the history of European art, ambiguities clouded,

veiled or permeated representations of the female body, rendering their meaning opaque or transparent. As a consequence, the female nude became the most fascinating and disturbing symbol in Western visual culture. For centuries artists refined and exploited it, while art-lovers succumbed to and were shocked by it. Psychoanalysts and feminists, however, were the first to probe the ambiguity of its erotic appeal. (McDonald 2001 p.7)

The nude within classical art is often presented as anthropomorphic representation of abstract concepts such as Love, Fate, or Beauty; alternatively, the figure may be referencing a character from myth or religion such as Aphrodite/Venus or even the Virgin Mother (Hess 1972 p. 224). One potential reason for the common use of the nude in this way is that this was an acceptable way for the nude to be presented in public, as they do not represent potentially available human figures, but figures never designed to be experienced physically by those observing the painting or sculpture. This has parallels with the introduction of ballet to England and America in 1827, which refuted claims of immoral imagery in the costumed dancers by exclusively presenting them as nymphs or equally ethereal characters (Allen 1991 pp. 88-89; p. 91). Images of nude goddesses and representations did not offend the sensibilities of the “educated” observer because of the distance between them and the figure in the image.

When artists began to present nude or undressed figures that referenced contemporary situations, particularly those who were removing clothing or had clothing of contemporary styles within the setting of the image, this was seen as a dangerous advance (Steele 2001 p. 113). The inclusion of contemporary references such as these meant the nude figures were potentially sexually available, or potentially referenced events the viewer would see in their life that may lead to physical encounters – for example, seeing an image of a woman undressing in a contemporary boudoir may remind the viewer of their wife in this state, or of females they may encounter elsewhere in their everyday life that, logically, must experience

this situation. This invitation to fantasize about living, relatable figures had and has much more potential for being read as pornographic or at least somewhat designed to arouse the (expectedly male) viewer (Bostrom & Malik 1999 p. 45). This is directly related to the discussion regarding corsets above; representing the undressing nude was considered significantly more sexually suggestive than the outright, unashamed nudity of the Classical goddesses.

More contemporary opinions of the nude in art have a more relaxed understanding of the limit between the sexual nude and the conceptual; the pushing of the boundary between the concepts is an accepted feature of the artistic nude, and the use of pornographic tropes is frequent. This use can be framed several different ways, depending on the artist, art form and the context of the presentation. Annie Sprinkle is known for her use of pornographic performance in her art, and for use of art concepts in her pornography; often based around the act of “looking”, Sprinkle invites audience members to stare through a magnifying glass at her cervix, or invites those watching her pornography at home to look and be looked at with her direct address of the camera (Sprinkle 2001; Willson 2008 p. 59).

I would not class Dr Sketchy’s as a form of art that pushes the boundary between art and pornography in the same way that the above art genres/artists do. Rather, I believe Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School, in its role as a facilitator of art creation, pushes the understanding of acceptable ways to produce that art and acceptable inspirations for that art in the form of the burlesque model. Introducing the sexualized figure of the burlesque dancer in a format of moderately traditional life drawing allows a refiguring of ideas about where the practical inspiration the figure model offers may come from. Dr Sketchy’s does not focus on the content of the art created from the sketches made during the event, but rather on producing an entertaining and different style of life drawing class. This is evident in the organization of the

event and the way attendees view Dr Sketchy's; it is primarily a life drawing event with burlesque inspirations and interludes.

The title itself 'Dr. Sketchy's Anti Art School' i think primarily advertises it as a drawing event, the burlesque part, just makes the subject of the art more interesting and risqué. As Auds says "it's not a spectator sport". People are there to draw. While it's not compulsory to draw, the audience participation is key. It's the purpose and focus of the night. Without it it would just be a dress up burlesque show. (Kimberley, Interview 17/11/2011)

Drawing... I mean that's the reason why I'm going. If it was [just] booze and burlesque I probably wouldn't go. So that means the three real reasons I'm going out is to go out and be with people and drink, for the life drawing and for um I guess the other part of it is that burlesque performance thing then... yeah. The bit without the drawing I wouldn't do normally. (Matthew, Interview 8/3/2011)

Though much of the inspirational material for the evening is unfamiliar to a traditional life drawing class, it is invaluable in highlighting the differences between Dr Sketchy's and the traditional life drawing class, and acts as framing material for the attendees to interpret these outside influences. One of the many questions I entered this research with was "Are people attending a life drawing event, or a burlesque performance?" The answer is both, and neither. People attend the event because the combination of styles presents a new experience that is familiar but unusual in its presentation. Before I conclude this thesis, I wish address more directly what is actually occurring within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, and how this event is being presented and experienced by those attending.

With all of the detail given above regarding the performance of burlesque and the format of the life drawing class both in their usual production and within Dr Sketchy's, I feel there are still a few points that require explicit acknowledgement and discussion. My interest here is

not simply in how the audience members experience the event, but how the models view their role throughout the night, and particularly how the organizers consciously structure the event and what they believe they are offering the performers and attendees within Dr Sketchy's. Using the extensive background explored above I will isolate how exactly this balance is designed and managed within Dr Sketchy's Christchurch and how the burlesque and life drawing formats work in unison, despite their contradictory nature, within the event.

So what exactly is occurring at Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School in Christchurch? Is this a life drawing event or a burlesque event and how are the two forms negotiated within the format to create a cohesive experience? My experiences with Dr Sketchy's have been varied and in some cases challenging. The desire to class this as a "life drawing event with some burlesque added" is strong, and one often vocalized by participants and organizing staff;

I think of it as primarily a life drawing thing because if it was primarily a burlesque thing you wouldn't pay so much attention to having poses and things. It would be run very differently if you removed either one of those factors. (Hells Belle Interview, 9/9/11)

Despite this I would hesitate to categorize it as such. This kind of categorization suggests the burlesque is an *addition* to the event that is unnecessary to the core format of the experience and of less importance than the life drawing segment of the evening. Without this burlesque performance, and more importantly, the understandings of nudity and sexualization that come with the burlesque framework, I do not believe the event would be able to involve the "sexy" figure of the model without breaching uncomfortable boundaries around the life drawing format. To introduce a sexually "active" figure to the life drawing format without the containment of the burlesque genre, which controls and authenticates the sexualized performance as artistic and separate from feared genres such as pornography and stripping, would problematize the construction of the event as art and therefore morally acceptable.

The introduction of a sexually framed model to a traditional life drawing class would distract and make uncomfortable those participating, as these are the boundaries the life drawing class is specifically set up in format to avoid. Though as individuals they may view the model in different ways, to actively present the model as a sexual figure there to perform their sexuality without reference to other forms of performance would negate the common understanding of the class format and reasoning. If, for example, a life drawing class included a model posing in sexual positions, this may be viewed as highly discomforting by the participants. This presentation would contain the potential for sexual engagement, whether real or imaginary, through the presentation of the model as a sexual object. Life drawing classes have constructed themselves historically in opposition to pornography and prostitution, and the breaking of these boundaries would invalidate the event and strip it of its genuine purpose. Those attending may no longer be there to fulfil their artistic desires, but instead engage their physical ones, which in the history of the life drawing format would negate the position of art outside of sexual desire.

Those who attend Dr Sketchy's must have some reason for doing so and some desire to engage with the art creation practices, whether they have any experience in art or not. Those attendees who would class themselves as experienced artists are an intriguing minority of the audience; it is easily understandable that those who feel intimidated by traditional life drawing classes may enjoy Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, but why attend when you are experienced with life drawing? One attendee proposes a potential reason these individuals attend;

For some people it's a regular thing they do with friends, so it's nice to see the same faces. Some people are breathtakingly talented, some people are just happy to scribble, everyone loves being there and improving there skills and trying different things. In my opinion there really isn't anything like Dr. Sketchy's. Anyone can go to an art class, but not many people get to go to an evening of

'All local talent/unique burlesque performance/costume party/art class/ while social drinking with your friends'. It wasn't until i went to my first one that i realized it's actually very much about people of any talent level, having a good time and getting people into drawing, in a fun, friendly, slightly inebriated environment. You also get to draw the human form in any way you like and in a more interesting way than ordinary life drawing. (Kimberley, Interview 12/11/11)

This suggests the event can potentially be cast a third way; not simply a life drawing event or a burlesque event, but it can also be considered a social event which happens to encompass features of these two formats, which may be secondary to the design of the event as a social space.

When discussing the attendees with the organizers of Dr Sketchy's Christchurch there is a definite focus on who they expect to attend, and their experience with life drawing and burlesque.

I had, what I thought was an idea [when starting Dr Sketchy's], I thought that a lot more fine arts people would come, and I thought that, I knew that burlesque fans would come, and that was definitely that was maintained. And I also knew that we'd get sort of like, you know an older crowd? I don't mean like geriatric crowd, but kind of like people that were over 30, but we got more people over the 30 age bracket than I expected, which I like. (Audrey, Interview 17/5/11)

I think there are a few people who have an interest in classic burlesque, like old-fashioned burlesque and vaudeville and wish it was the 30's and this is the closest they can get to something like that in Christchurch, and to be honest I'm one of those people that's why I recognize them. And then there are a lot of like people who also I guess like me who are friends with a lot of artists and love the art world but have no real talent or training but enjoy the fun of it, ...and there

are people who are really serious artists who come along too who just love that it's something different for them to draw. (Hells Belle, Interview 9/9/2011)

This expectation regarding the range of experience and the appeal the organizers wish the event to have for both beginners and those more experienced mean the event is designed to appeal on different levels to different attendees. Those who do not usually attend life drawing or have little experience with artistic training will find the experience of drawing any figure novel. Those who are more experienced require there to be further reason for attending than simply this; the figure is available to them at other times and locations outside of the Anti-Art School. These individuals are targeted by the organizers not only in the content of the show, but in the atmosphere of the event as a whole.

They come along for the environment and something different to draw that they're not really going to be able to set up on their own... yeah its a bit weird if your take a sketchpad along to a strictly burlesque event. I guess its maybe its also kind of like, a time for them to set aside for their art? If you're like 'ok I've paid for my ticket I'm going, I'm going to ride the ride', no slacking off. (Audrey, Interview 17/5/11)

So why am I hesitant to classify this as “a life drawing event with some added burlesque” when there is a definite focus on this style of presentation? If all the attendees came strictly for the life drawing aspect of Dr Sketchy's I would have little hesitation doing so. But there are attendees who also come out of a vested interest in burlesque, and those who come with no particular attachment to either format but who are simply looking for an entertaining evening out. The burlesque element brings the life drawing format to an approachable level for those people who are outside of the art education system, who would feel otherwise intimidated by a life drawing session, even one located in a bar. Life drawing still holds the preconception of “high art” and basic requirements of some art skills, the possession of the identity “Artist”. Within Dr Sketchy's there are certainly artists, but they come secondary to

the identity of “Art Monkey”. Burlesque is conceived of as a “low” activity compared to life drawing, it is something that requires little participation from the audience and is more accessible to the inexperienced and casual observer. An event that combines life drawing and burlesque is embracing that accessibility, removing as many of the barriers to participating in the life drawing experience without alienating those who are “Artists”. The Anti-Art School does not require that you are an artist or even that you create art, only that you are open to experiencing art creation as it happens around you.

None of the attendees I spoke to through the course of this research expressed any hesitation in joining the art creation once they had experienced the event, whereas nervousness and inhibitions towards art were common amongst those attending their first session. In a standard bar format with some kind of entertainment offered, it would not be expected those attending would have hesitations towards attending because of their perceived experience or familiarity with the event; forms of entertainment usually offered in a social space such as a bar emphasize the passive viewing and limited interaction from the side of the audience, which allows a broad range of people to attend. Audience members are expected to interact in small groups rather than with every other member of the space. Within Dr Sketchy’s this is exactly the type of interaction encouraged within the audience, and interaction of some kind with the model/performer is common. This is where I distinguish the differences between a standard “social event” and Dr Sketchy’s Anti-Art School, and why I would not classify it as simply a “social event with some drawing and burlesque added”. Again I want to emphasize the balance between the formats and the different understandings of how to experience these formats in terms of framing Dr Sketchy’s as a unique event. Within a bar there is little *communitas* between the audience members; even in events where there may be a compatible atmosphere, such as a sports bar viewing a game, there is little focus on inter-audience communication or participation as the goal is for the patrons to focus on the game, and their

drinks; the *communitas* comes from their collective support of the game, not their connection to each other. Drinking at Dr Sketchy's is encouraged, and assists in breaking down initial inhibitions, but there are no visible attendees there exclusively for the drinks and they often take a background role to the focus on the stage. As discussed previously, the layout of the room as a whole discourages excessive drinking or focus on the bar over the stage.

In this fourth chapter I have addressed the conception of the "Nude" in art and in burlesque performance, examining the contradictions in the way the two formats approach the nude figure and how within Dr Sketchy's there has been a balance constructed, whereby the two seemingly contradictory understandings are blended to allow a different interpretation of the nude within the event. The question posed at the beginning of this thesis, asking whether this is a life drawing or a performance event, has also been directly addressed and discussed with the full context of the history given in the previous chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

This thesis focused on presenting an understanding of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School as an event closely connected to the history of the burlesque performance genre and of life drawing education. I have discussed ideas of power and representation, *communitas* among the attendees of the event, the links and boundaries between art and pornography, the concept of the "anti-art school" and the primary roles played by the model/performer and audience/art creators present at the event. I have focused on the figure of the "nude" as central to both genres of performance and have argued that there is a distinguishable difference between the nude of the burlesque and that of the life drawing, and that these conceptions are balanced and combined within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School to frame the experience in specific ways..

The questions I have approached in this study can be framed as relating to what performances occur at Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, and how the event is negotiating the two differing conceptual backgrounds of life drawing and burlesque performance. What is the nature of the performances happening within this event, and who is doing the performing? These questions focus on the event as a cultural performance or series of performances bound within a single event, and focuses on the two formats of burlesque and life drawing identified as central to the event. This focus explores the way the two genres are crossed and inverted within the event, the conceptual disconnections between the two genres, and how they structure Dr Sketchy's as an experience.

Within this topic and this event I believe there are many other approaches that could have been taken and that I hope other researchers will take in the future; for instance, in this thesis I have not referred at all to anthropological theories of the body, which could have offered many further points of discussion in relation to this topic. I chose not to pursue that line of discussion as I feel it would have spread my focus too wide and would not have allowed me

to discuss the performance facets of Dr Sketchy's in suitable detail. As well as this there are over a hundred current branches of Dr Sketchy's, and I have not attempted to present a comparative analysis of multiple branches or different cultural circumstances; a cross-cultural comparison would offer up many points and concepts for discussion that are not present in this single-sited ethnography. What I have done with my thesis is offer a detailed look at the influences and structures present in the Christchurch, New Zealand branch of Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, and hopefully offered an insight into the processes and experiences available at the event.

Were Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School to lose its life drawing component, it is true that there would be a larger space of time to fill, and much of the distinctiveness of the event would be lost. What I aim to show within this thesis is that the two formats and styles of performance are used to compliment each other within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School, despite their immediate contradictory understandings of the nude figure and sexualization. Within this complimentary structure they also act to control the other; the burlesque offers a frame of understanding for the sexualized model and contains that sexuality in a way that allows the format of the life drawing class to continue uninterrupted. Likewise, the life drawing format lends the burlesque performance an understanding of artistic merit and allows the burlesque to position itself against the life drawing as an authentic form of performance and representation. To hold the event without the life drawing activity would simply render the event a rather uninspiring, ordinary burlesque performance with little draw for those who would not otherwise attend a burlesque show.

This last point is crucial to how the event is experienced and marketed; without both the life drawing and the burlesque there is little draw for those outside of or previously uninterested in each format. The people that attend the event are not necessarily those that attend a normal neo-burlesque show, or those that attend a traditional life drawing class. Many express during

the evening that they would not normally participate in life drawing classes, or attend burlesque locally. For the latter, this is either because it is not something they would otherwise be interested in though they enjoy it within the context of Dr Sketchy's, or because though they enjoy burlesque they have doubts about the quality or style of local acts. When it comes to those who do not normally attend life drawing classes, this seems to be a large portion of the patrons of the event, and the reasons for this can be seen along a spectrum of opinion. Many would feel intimidated attending an ordinary life drawing class because they do not have art training or feel their skills are inadequate for the setting. Many would not know where to begin when it comes to accessing life drawing classes or making contact with those who participate in such events because they are outside of the art education system. Others may have attended life drawing classes before, but found them boring or uninspiring, or simply no longer desired to make time for the class because of outside reasons. Some who attend Dr Sketchy's are known artists who do attend traditionally styled life drawing classes, or who contract models privately for life drawing.

I have argued that the combination of the two forms of burlesque performance and life drawing allows Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School to transgress the traditional boundaries of each format, and introduce influences that would otherwise endanger the status of life drawing and burlesque performance within their respective histories. Without both formats present and balanced in this manner, the event would not offer a successful and enjoyable experience to a range of participants and performers. I have also argued that the nude within Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School transgresses the traditional conception of the nude within life drawing as non-sexual in nature and requiring a separation from the physical, sensual body by using burlesque as an acceptable reference for the transgressive elements of the show. These transgressive elements to life drawing are the basic tenets of burlesque, the presentation of a sensual and sexually present figure with individual agency, a figure that not only presents

herself to an audience, but takes enjoyment and feels empowered by her presentation. The balance and compromise of the life drawing and burlesque performance formats allows the nude as a sexual figure to be experienced within an art creation scenario, and for that scenario to be available to those outside of the traditional art education institute, without creating discomfort for those involved. Dr Sketchy's Anti-Art School offers a unique entrance into the two worlds of burlesque and art creation, offering a combination of two worlds which many patrons may otherwise never experience, and with it has offered a unique field of anthropological study.

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